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State and Regional Design Awards

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— KATHERINE LEE SCHWENNSEN, 2006 AIA PRESIDENT





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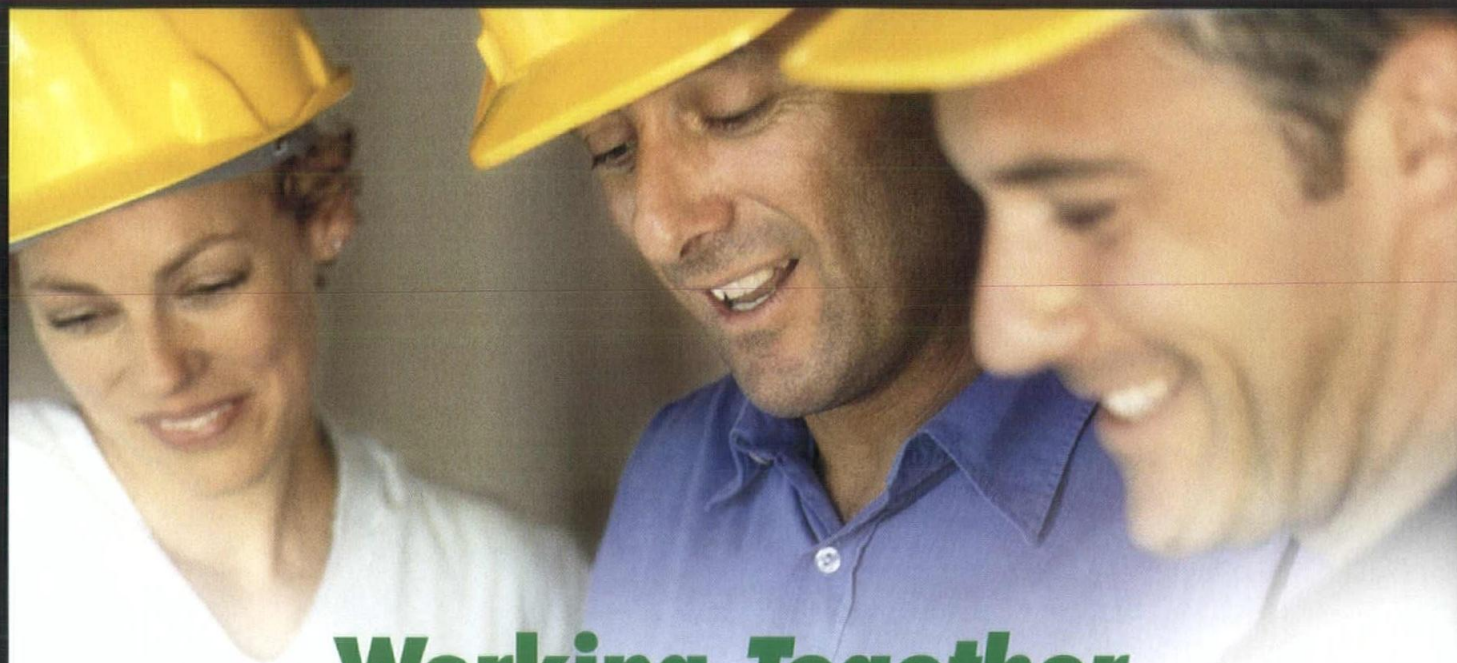
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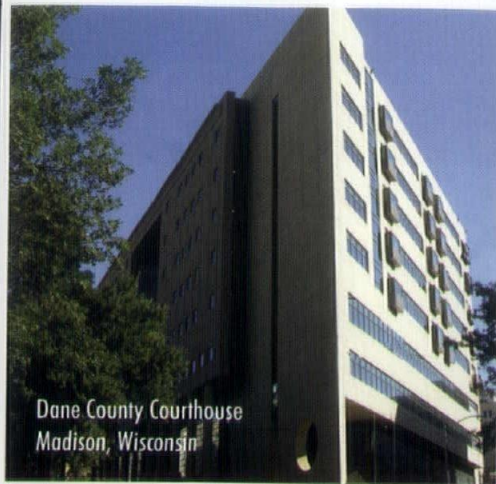
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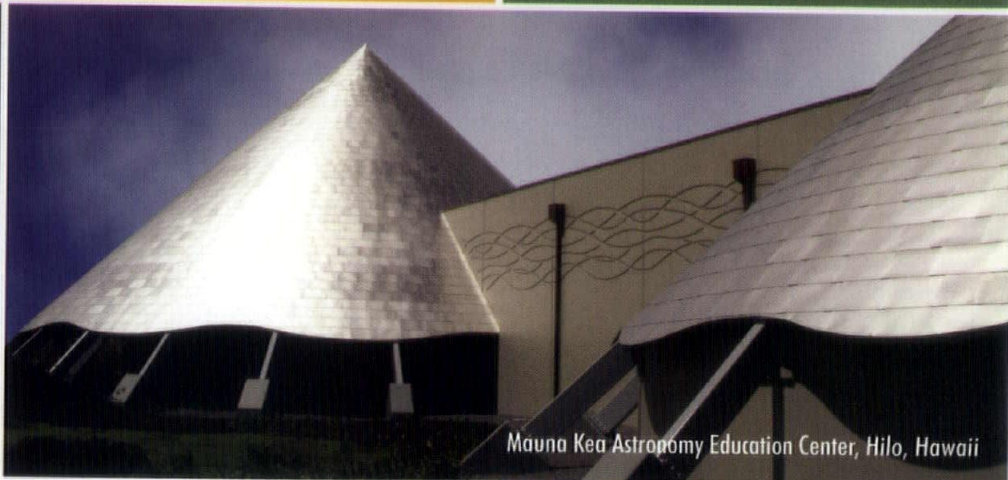
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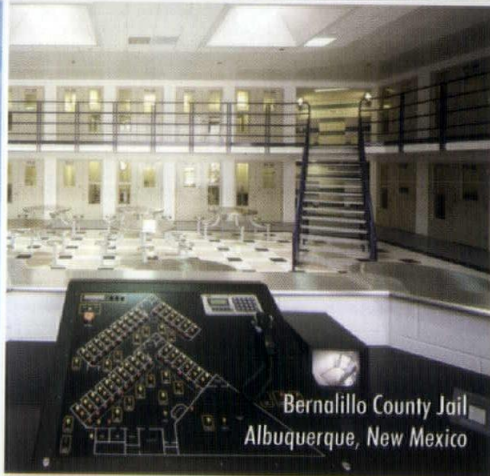
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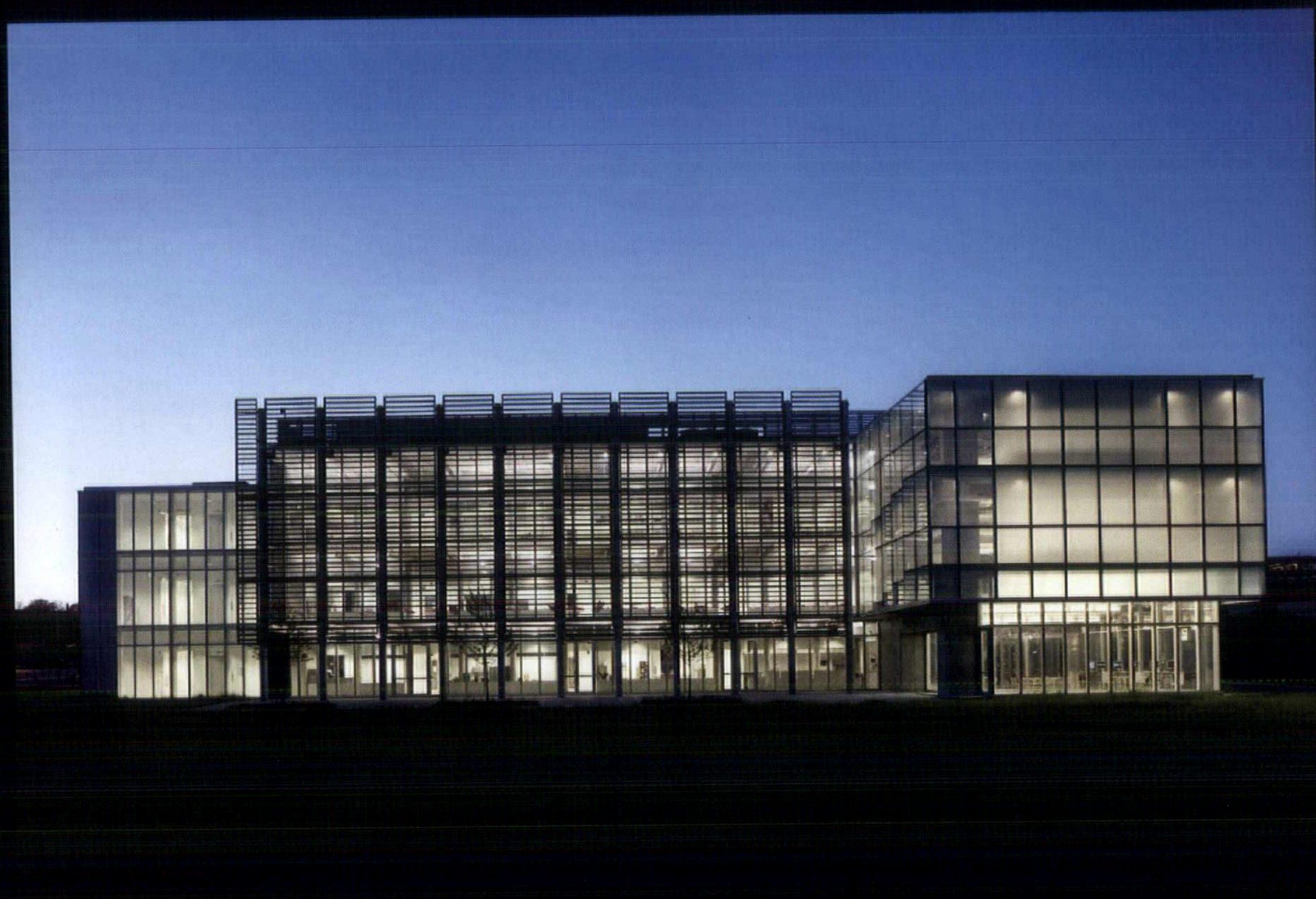
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# IOWA Architect 06:255

## 2005 STATE AND REGIONAL DESIGN AWARDS

John and Mary Pappajohn Education Center 1

RenSt Loft 1

Blank Honors Center, University of Iowa 1

Hoyt Sherman Place Auditorium Restoration 2

McWethy Hall Renovation, Cornell College 2

Bergstrom Indoor Training Facility, Iowa State University 2

John Crystal Center, Grinnell College 2

St. Paul Lutheran Church 2

Bankers Trust North Branch 3

Citizens' Community Center 3

Wells Fargo Skyview Building 3

### Central States Region Awards

McClendon Athletic Center, Heritage Hall School 3

Alberici Corporation Headquarters

Kimmel Theatre/Youngker Hall and 3

Armstrong Hall Renovation, Cornell College

Westside Business Park

Choctaw Library

Waitt Media Corporate Interiors 3

Fingerman Residence

Principal Riverwalk Master Plan

Kenyon Building 3

Baptist Medical Center, Heart Institute

5 Delaware Lofts

Abode Home Store 4

Bizarre

P+D House

Mid City Bank

Iowa Design Excellence Awards Jury 4

ISU Architecture Awards 4

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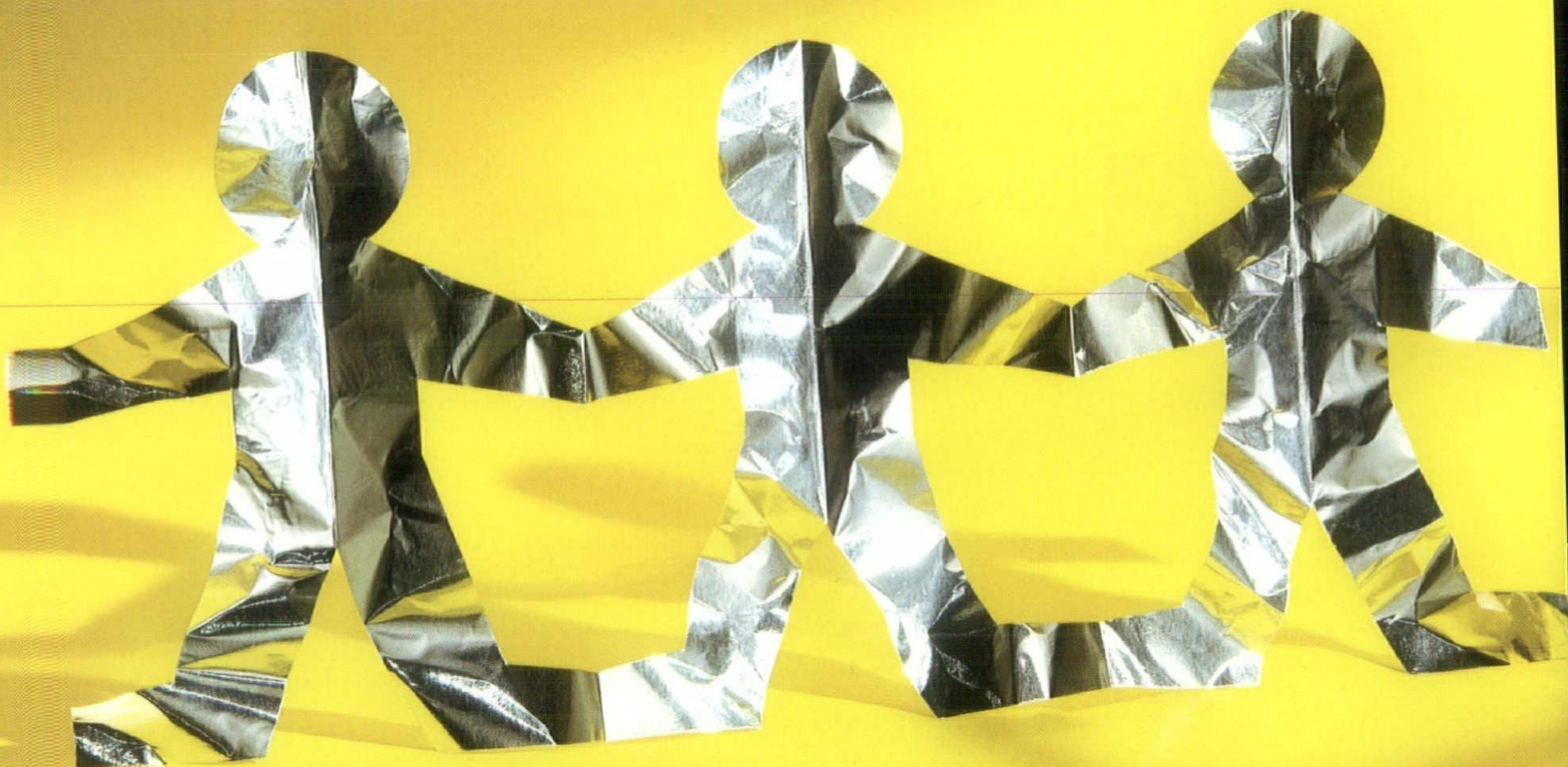
Advocacy

Alternatives 1

COVER: The eco-friendly Kirei Board, an alternative to engineered building materials, is made from sorghum stalks.

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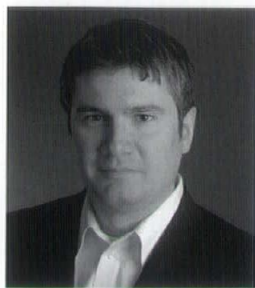
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 Pella is proud to sponsor this issue of the *Iowa Architect*, featuring Kate Schwennsen. We wish her the best as 2006 AIA president.



# 2005 AWARDS



Welcome to a new and improved edition of our State and Regional Design Awards issue of *Iowa Architect*. This issue firmly sets a stake into the ground delineating the history of this magazine. We are building upon what we have learned on this journey, adjusting course, and moving forward confidently. No longer will we be content to simply publish the projects judged to be

the best in our state in our annual awards program; we will be publishing those projects *and* offering editorial comment and critique as to why those projects have been set apart from the crowd.

We have set this course for a few reasons.

First, the primary mission goal of *Iowa Architect* is to be an advocate of quality design to the general public. It is imperative that *Iowa Architect*, as the most visible and far-reaching arm of the public relations hydra of the Iowa Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, fulfill this most important of missions.

Second, you, the readership of this magazine, have demanded more editorial content from *Iowa Architect*. A survey of general readership of the magazine was conducted this past year and we have heard the message loud and clear. The added editorial content of the Awards issue will increase the quantity of editorial issues from two to three and add approximately 6–11 project stories per year. We hope you agree this is a move that benefits the readership and the magazine alike.

This issue contains projects that tell a story of great midwestern architecture—past and present. Recognized for excellence by the Iowa Chapter and the Central States Region of the American Institute of Architects, these projects demand attention, contemplation, evaluation, and...respect.

Channing Swanson, AIA  
Editor, *Iowa Architect*



An inherent part of defining projects that advocate good design is selecting the appropriate jury. Often these juries come from large metropolitan areas stocked with a plethora of design talent, not familiar with the quality of the architecture of the perhaps lesser known states. They can also be found in the smaller metropolitan areas of the country where designers are quietly, but effectively making an equal difference to our built communities, as was the case with this year's jury.

As he stepped to the podium, it was unclear what sort of message the jury chair would share with the assembled design professionals at this year's Awards Banquet. It had been years since a member of the jury had been available to not only share the winners, but provide feedback to both the successful and unsuccessful moments of the winning projects. To our enthusiasm, Frank Harmon, FAIA, with his charming southern drawl, did not disappoint. The humbleness with which he spoke of the great projects of our state was testimony not only to the type of person that he is, but also to the quality of the work being produced here. It turns out that while many of us admire the quality of design emanating from his small firm in Raleigh, North Carolina, he is all the while keeping a close eye on the quality of work being produced in our state.

To this we must applaud the work of the jury Frank assembled to sort through more than 60 projects representing our state. (See page 40 for more information on the jury.) The incredible dialogue and keen eye of this year's jury resulted in the recognition of 11 projects; Eleven projects dubbed by the jury as having those qualities inherent in advocating good design.

Congratulations to this year's winners!

Matt Rodekamp, AIA  
2005 Awards Cochair



## There's Something About Kate



Illustrations created by RDG Planning & Design, honoring Kate Schwennsen's presidency, were displayed at RDG's office for a reception during the Fall '04 AIA Convention.

**JET LAG** / The plane halts at the Des Moines International Airport gate, and Kate Schwennsen, FAIA, 2006 AIA president and associate dean of the College of Design at Iowa State University in Ames, deplanes. It's been a long flight back from a convention in Sri Lanka, and in the next three weeks she'll be off to Missouri; Florida; Washington, D.C.; and California. If anything, the AIA presidency is a frenzied yearlong journey—travel, meetings, committees—but one not without its rewards. “A recent AIA president kept a diary and recounted how he woke up in his own bed on a Saturday morning only five times during his year of tenure,” says Barry Jones, Kate's husband of 22 years.

“On the flip side, in one week she presented the AIA Gold Medal to Antoine Predock, had lunch with President Bush, and flew to Southeast Asia,” Barry says. “Not everyone's calendar is that interesting. It has its appeals for someone who has the drive.”

Kate is just the second woman to lead the AIA, and most who know her well would say that drive characterizes her professional life. But her presidency comes at a defining moment in the profession, when members are grappling with issues of technology, diversity, and sustainability. Kate's career, and her journey to the leadership of a 77,000-member organization, is rife with lessons learned, cautions for the present—and hope for the future.



## A Career, a Life, a Search for Balance

It wasn't so much that a woman was managing the \$10 million project in Tucson, Arizona, that made the construction superintendents nervous. It was that Kate seemed to press on through the months, undaunted, even as her midsection kept protruding. "I had my first child six years into my internship, following a pregnancy when I put in more than four months of uncompensated overtime," Kate says.

Driven, always focused on the future: That defines Kate then and now, from her growing-up years in Dubuque, Iowa, through undergraduate and master's programs at Iowa State University. It was never so much an issue that she would enter a demanding profession with few female mentors to pattern her practice after. What mattered was that she liked buildings, art, and math; had supportive parents and a Midwestern work ethic; and brought a tough-as-nails approach to education and practice. "When it came time to apply for graduate school, I made the mistake of asking my undergraduate faculty advisor for advice for my entrance essay. He said, 'Not to sound sexist, but what's to prevent you from getting this education [by which he meant taking the place of a male student] and then becoming pregnant, and never using your education to practice architecture?'" Kate says. "To which I responded, 'What's to prevent you from getting hit by a truck?'"

That wit and rugged skin continued to serve Kate well as she had two children and took the Architectural Registration Examination—without cracking a book (she passed six of the nine parts on her first try). "My 1987, beautiful, hand-calligraphied registration certificate from the state of Iowa says, 'This hereby certifies that Katherine L. Schwennsen has fulfilled all of his qualifications for registration,'" Kate says. "I have it proudly hanging on my office wall as a memento of a hopefully bygone era."

## The Challenges of a Profession

In many ways, architecture is unforgiving. The educational experience is grueling. The hours are long. The work is stressful and demanding. The pay is less than other equally demanding professions. It is a profession that seems to amplify the struggles that any working parent faces, and Kate's experience is no exception. By the time Iowa State offered her a full-time teaching position in 1991—at half her salary—she jumped at the opportunity.

Architectural education is good at luring women, but less adept at keeping them once professional life begins. "When I first started teaching professional practice, I attempted to do my own local diversity study. I called [the state board]...and said, 'I know there are about 450 licensed architects resident in Iowa. How many of those are women?'" Kate says. The answer was about 12.

"You see, I could count them all. I knew them all. There was Judy, and Martha, and Janet, and Cherie, and me. I'm happy to say that now, a decade later, I don't know all the female architects in the state."

Kate chose an alternative path that enabled her to carve out time with her growing children. It was a decision that, at one time or another, many architects face. "Students graduating, likely both men and women, invest so much time and energy getting accepted to the professional program, and sometimes nearing the end of their education, that they discover the realities of practicing architecture don't necessarily align with what they had initially assumed those realities would be," says Danielle Hermann, Associate AIA, who was a student of Kate's. "This might be even more disconcerting for women who face balancing work and life in a somewhat unforgiving and demanding professional setting."

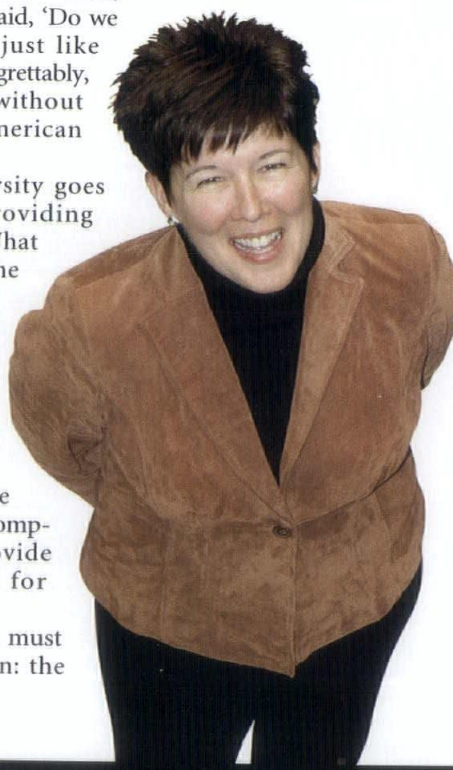
Kate found her own work/life balance, and in the process, became a role model—even if female membership in architecture remains a paltry 12 percent. "Women look to other women ahead of them to set a precedent. The knowledge that such achievement can be reached, especially for women in Iowa who have few or no female role models in positions of leadership within firms in the state to look to, is pretty powerful in itself," Danielle says. "Kate is a living example that one's role need not be defined narrowly."

Even as the profession struggles with keeping women in its ranks, it also faces an uphill battle in diversifying its membership. During that same informal diversity study, Kate asked the architectural board how many African-American architects Iowa had. The answer was a lightning shot. "Well, Minnesota has one." To which I said, "Do we share him?" I knew him too, just like I knew the women," Kate says. "Regrettably, Iowa is one of six states still without a resident licensed African-American architect."

For Kate, the issue of diversity goes back to the central idea of providing mentorship and leadership. "What came first, the role model or the under-represented individual?" she says. "The decision to become an architect is sometimes derailed for minorities and women when they discover the costs associated with becoming an architect and the relatively low compensation. The remedies are obvious but difficult: increase compensation in practice and provide adequate financial resources for education and internship."

It may be, too, that architecture must adjust the basis of its foundation: the

*Driven, always focused  
on the future:  
That defines Kate.*





Below left: While Kate's husband spends most of his time tending the home fires, he does travel occasionally with her. Here, Kate and Barry stand in front of fountains and a mosque in Istanbul, Turkey.

Below right: Travels take Kate across the globe in her year as AIA president, and to meetings with architects and associated professionals. In Luxembourg, Kate signed a mutual recognition agreement with the Architects Council of Europe.



studio culture. The long hours, the competitive atmosphere, the relative isolation, the juries—all are elements that dissuade women, ethnic minorities, homosexuals, and disabled students. “Most curricula completely exclude the contributions of women and minorities, and many minority students are first-generation college students, with nontraditional preparation and minimal financial support,” Kate says. But the remedies will be long-term: diversifying faculty and curriculum, humanizing and diversifying studio culture, and providing adequate scholarships and internships.

Kate is undeterred, and realizes small steps are key to a profession that, for all its challenges, she and many others still view as a calling. “Architecture education was then and remains a rich and rewarding education... It prepared me to be able to think strategically and pragmatically, to imagine distant possibilities and near-term implementation, to always be balancing multiple variables in any decision-making. The integrative, synthetic thinking that is design thinking is valuable for dealing with all kinds of complex issues beyond building design,” Kate says. “There is not a more fascinating life pursuit than the practice of architecture.”

### Looking Forward

For all the challenges, architecture may be uniquely poised to deal with two of the greatest upheavals facing the 21st century: sustainability and the impact of technology. Kate believes those issues, combined with diversity, define not only her presidency, but possibly the role architects take worldwide as well. “The recognized need by architects [to be] advocates and experts of green building practices and standards is global, as is the

recognition for us to be better mentors to the next generation of architects,” Kate says. “In this country, the need for improved methods of project delivery is a common effort and interest.”

Kate’s “nontraditional” career path may have given her the background that a traditionally practicing architect could not. Mark Engelbrecht, formerly a principal with Engelbrecht and Griffin and now dean of the College of Design at Iowa State, taught Kate in school and hired her for her first post-education job. “Over the years, Kate has enjoyed a ringside seat to the amazing development of information technologies in both the practice and the academy,” Mark says. “Kate and I both come from modestly scaled towns in our state, and these early experiences, and the changes in those places since, have focused our shared interest in the sustainability of communities and, by extension, the larger issue of the stewardship of our built and natural environment.”

*“The integrative, synthetic thinking that is design thinking is valuable for dealing with all kinds of complex issues beyond building design.”*

— KATE SCHWENNSEN, 2006 AIA PRESIDENT

It is a chance, it seems, for the profession to define the nature of the debate, rather than be defined by it. “Sustainability is the external issue for the profession to the citizens of the world. Since buildings utilize 48 percent of the energy and are responsible for 48 percent of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, architects must address this subject,” says Doug Steidl, 2005 AIA president and founding partner of Braun & Steidl Architects. “Change

occurs through continuity of vision over time. Kate is the fourth president in a row to present a consistent vision to the architects of the AIA. She knows what is important, how the issues need to be presented, and the effect that that consistent message will have over time. Kate realizes that change is progressive and it doesn’t occur overnight.”

It’s a difficult issue, nonetheless—one that involves not only powers of persuasion but an involvement in planning beyond a building’s borders. “One of the biggest challenges is convincing clients that it’s important to spend a few extra bucks on a building,” Kate says. “But even more difficult is having an influence on development and urban design issues, which have a huge impact on our energy consumption.”

That potential for collaboration with developers and urban planners speaks also to the central role that technology







## A Legacy

Spend any amount of time with Kate—an hour, a day, a year or two—and the image that sticks in your memory is not so much a picture as the sound of a hearty, deep, genuine laugh, never faked or forged. She also tells it straight—and that's a good thing.

"I have always found her to be focused on the outcome, the future," Doug Steidl says. "I remember a time in an AIA board meeting when she presented an issue for approval that had been conceptualized at an earlier board meeting. When it was time to discuss the motion, a board member began backtracking.... Kate immediately interrupted him and said, 'Sorry, you had your chance to state that at the last meeting. We've moved beyond that discussion and we're not going back. I'm calling the question, let's vote.'"

"As she returned to her seat, she leaned over to me and asked if she was too blunt. I told her that in my opinion, that was leadership," Doug says. "Kate will lead this profession with compassion and understanding, but she definitely will push to move it forward where it needs to change."

There's no sense denying that Kate's career, and her skills, developed because she chose to practice architecture at a time when few women did, but those challenges shaped the kind of AIA president she has become. "Kate is a tremendous listener, a very approachable and genuine person," says RK, who will take over as AIA president in 2007. "Her desire to 'leave the place better than we found it' is a heartfelt obligation that infects everyone she collaborates with. Kate is also interested in getting things done, a real virtue in leading any organization."

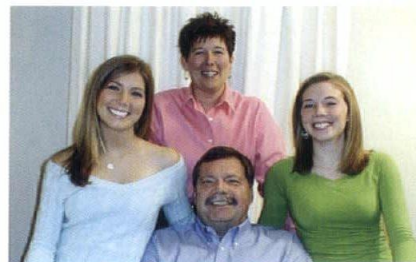
There are few grand notions Kate has about the potential for change in just one year. Instead, the course she has charted continues to pave the way for incremental growth, for leadership by example and force of personality. Members will, of course, recall that she is just the second woman president. Besides that, what's the legacy Kate believes she will leave? "My laugh... and that I brought energy to the position."

*"Kate will lead this profession with compassion and understanding, but she definitely will push to move it forward where it needs to change."*

— DOUG STEIDL, 2005 AIA PRESIDENT

Left: Most of her time abroad is spent shaking hands and learning as much as she can about demands on the profession. In Sri Lanka, after a conference, Kate toured an elephant orphanage with board members of the Architects Regional Council of Asia.

Below: Kate's daughters, Megan (left) and Anna, don't miss her as much now that they are older, but the time demands of her successful practice eventually steered her down an academic career path. Her husband, Barry Jones, AIA, continues to work at the firm Engelbrecht and Griffin, where he and Kate first met.



## BIOGRAPHY

Katherine L. Schwennsen, FAIA

**Spouse:** Barry Jones (also an architect)

**Children:** Megan, 20, and Anna, 18

**Biggest surprise since becoming AIA president:** How interested people are in what I have to say.

**Biggest disappointment:** That I can't accept every invitation.

**Biggest thrill:** I was thrilled when the presidential medal was put around my neck. It was also pretty thrilling to put the Gold Medal around Antoine Predock's neck.

**Most favorite building:** Right now it's Hagia Sophia, which I was able to visit last summer. It is an incredible interior space, preceding St. Peter's Basilica by 1,000 years.

**Least favorite building:** JFK airport.



# ALTERNATIVES

BY CATHERINE RENAE

One Thousand, Nine Hundred & Eight Spare Minutes

DATE OF INSTALLATION: 02.11.05 / PHOTOGRAPHY: MITCHELL SQUIRE /

SHOW SERIES: *IDLE HANDS* / LOCATION OF INSTALLATION: FITCHSTUDIOS, LLC

Installation video



Journeys into the rural environment  
Dust, mud, manure, rock, soil, insects & rain  
Abandoned structures.  
THESE are what possess me.

Like a strike through time  
I alter its existence.  
Most always dresses of white dance  
in the rearview mirror of my friend.  
My feet, if you will, on this path.

I notice these things & most certainly more  
thinking not lightly of their impact on my mental state.  
My car becomes a collector in this journey through Iowa.  
Pieces of the abandoned join me in my endless pursuit  
THESE have chosen me without prejudice.  
They tell me that the gift of my travel is their permanent uprooting.

Installation



Installation



In return for their loyalty & honesty  
I have chosen not to wash them away thoughtlessly but  
To bring them to the surface of their vast realm  
& expose their beauty.

With the help of my Honda (Miranda)  
& the "Chronological Division Kit"  
I am presenting to you what has clung to  
Me on an intimate journey along the rural roads of Iowa  
for a duration of...

One Thousand, Nine Hundred & Eight Spare Minutes

Vials







Installation

Catherine, the Honda and her team of collection bags hit the gravel, spending one thousand, nine hundred and eight spare minutes in the rural environment of Iowa. By attaching collection bags she designed to collect material and exhibit the harshness of the rural environment, viewers are able to see the wide range of variation of the rural surroundings on many levels. Iowa's gravel lines part of the floor to prepare for the experience, while the viewer, right away upon walking in, becomes fused with video putting them at the wheel of Miranda and her travels. The exhibits, in various containers, intimate moments from this journey.

Boxes from the "Chronological Division Kits" line the ground under the bags and are open only far enough to expose part of each abandoned building photo that Catherine has chosen, letting the viewer know that these moments are private and must be experienced by themselves to fully enjoy them. Vials exhibit the intimate pieces of the environment that her collection bags have gathered, and the room smells of rural soil and animal that arises from the collection bags and their contents. Each corner of the installed hanging collection bags spatially becomes an abandoned room, slightly moving in the breeze as each viewer walks past.

*A special thanks to Iowa State University assistant professor of architecture Mitchell Squire, for his constant guidance and support of my work; my husband Brian J. Thomas for his optimism and continued interest in my work; Cameron Campbell; the Idle Hands Gang; David J. Llewellyn and Jeffery Morgan for the use of their extraordinarily unique gallery space at FITCHstudios; Brent Hoffman; Miranda [the Honda]; The State of Iowa; Greg Wattier; GE Wattier Architecture, Inc.; Susemihl's Uptown Standard; Kness Signs, Inc.; Actions Reprographics; Iowa Paint and Sigler Printing.*



## AWARD

AIA IOWA HONOR AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

CENTRAL STATES REGION  
MERIT AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

# All the World is a Screen

## A COMPUTER ATMOSPHERE FOR LATTER-DAY LEARNING

*JURY COMMENTS: Elegant use of materials, a clearly organized plan and beautifully composed. We liked the way the stair embraces and animates the commons. Beautiful details of concrete structure and windows; the column objectifies itself.*

*An unambiguous response to a highly ambiguous program, the Pappajohn Education Center reconciles divided alliances not as dialogue or dialectic but as a unity that addresses two with one.*

**Right:** The three-story high circulation space at the south elevation as seen from above.

**Below:** The entrance elevation with adjacent ornamental stair in three-story high atrium lobby.

Even from a distance one senses a crystalline presence about the Pappajohn Education Center. It glows from within—not unlike the way E.T. glowed when emoting, or, one presumes, the way a nuclear reactor glows in production. Photographic images reinforce the building's luminosity. Its all-glass wrapper, milk-ish and translucent, facilitates it. Had the building been built in Berlin, ca. 1920, its plan would have been either biomorphic or fractured, its gestures greatly exaggerated, and its style unmistakably expressionistic. In 21st century Des Moines, the plan is standard Modernism: L-shaped and undoubtedly economical.

The Center facilitates an alliance of education with business. On three levels, its nine standard classrooms open to the urban thoroughfare (north) side of the building, while its two large lecture rooms are stacked above a glass lobby on the park side of the building. Lecture rooms are comprised of three walls of milk-white fritted insulating glass, while standard classrooms have but one wall of this glass, glass that translates street traffic and noise to a blur and a hum. In all these rooms, flip-of-a-switch, roll-

down blinds control the abundance of light, while cylindrical metal ducts provide air at the desired temperature.

Not located in downtown Des Moines per se, the center sits remotely to its east, beside the Main Public Library, at a street corner on the north edge of a flat, treeless site. Too small to relate to the big-business buildings in the distance and too elegant to agree with its more immediate three-story neighbors, its loneliness could not be more evident. Yet it occupies a central position in what's promised to be a kind of miniature Central Park—a "natural amenity" dubbed Gateway Park and intended to be bordered by trees.

One enters the center from its street-shared-by-library side. An all-glass weather lock serves as principle entrance, initiating a circulation axis that services all three levels of classrooms and runs the east-west length of the building to terminate at vending machines and a fritted glass wall. Borrowed-light offices—display cases for human resource—front the primary circulation path, protecting classrooms from the resounding noise of three levels of public movement. Circulation floats in an ether of multiple-level space, from the three-story lobby that houses a metal and concrete



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**Project:** John and Mary Pappajohn Education Center  
**Location:** Des Moines, IA  
**Architect:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**General Contractor:** Miron Construction  
**Electrical Engineer:** KJWW Engineering Consultants  
**Mechanical Engineer:** KJWW Engineering Consultants  
**Structural Engineer:** Charles Saul Engineering  
**Interior Designer:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**Photographer:** Farshid Assassi, Hon. AIA Iowa, Assassi Productions ©

DANIEL NAEGELE







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**Left: Interior curtain wall at corner looking south to screen of Cor-ten louvers outside.**

**Below: South elevation with colonnade of concrete posts supporting Cor-ten louvers where fritted glass becomes clear glass.**

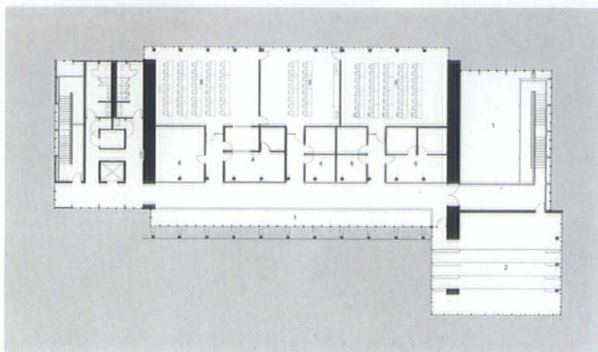


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ornamental stair to a three-story corridor that seeks to unify in a single envelope all that is contained in the glass walls. As a result, one reads classrooms, offices and lecture halls as containers contained within a larger container.

The aesthetic is hardly incidental. The atmosphere is iconic. Underscored by exposed concrete that supports a minimalist palette of industrial materials and neutral tones, it maintains a “building as warehouse for learning” theme. Cool, anonymous, systemic and with few unencumbered views out, the center glows internally. Its light is like that of a backlit computer screen. Its tone is honed to perfection, relentless in its endeavor to unite business and education.

—Daniel Naegele, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Architecture at Iowa State University.



**Above: Third floor plan with services on the left, classrooms and borrowed-light offices in the middle, and upper atrium and large lecture hall on the right.**



## AWARD

AIA IOWA HONOR AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

CENTRAL STATES REGION  
CITATION AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

# Space Container

PURITY IN THE FACE OF OPPOSITION

*JURY COMMENTS: Incredibly thoughtful in detail, this small dwelling celebrates the kitchen of its chef owner. It's easy to make mistakes on a small project, but here is a consistency of detail and form that is commendable.*

*RenSt Loft slips into its pre-existing warehouse structure. Its surfaces, materials and details resonate 'cube,' while its clarity contrasts with loft sentimentality to question the way we live.*

**Below left: View across kitchen island of minimal living space and double-height window wall to south.**

**Below right: Floor plan of lower level.**

At least since the early 1920s when Le Corbusier "discovered" the two-story volume in a Paris restaurant and offered it to architecture as his Maison Citrohan, the precise, geometric, and unadorned capsule—distinctly rectilinear and very much not object but space—has been an ideal of Modern Movement designers. Add to this cubic void Bauhaus theories of minimalism, the high-tech adornment of Chareau's Maison de Verre, the single-space pavilion of Mies' Farnsworth, the tendency of a Charles Moore to contain containers, and an Ando habitat à la Kahn's British Art Center, and one has something like a family tree for Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture's (HLKB) RenSt Loft. Its big idea has been a mainstay of Modernism for nearly 90 years.

This long-running pedigree, however, in no way diminishes its present appearance in Des Moines. For this slice of orthogonal space is slid almost innocuously into a 1924 warehouse—an industrial-era container cleaned and converted to console us with nostalgia of days gone by. The RenSt Loft resists consolation. And if a warehouse, by nature, is brutally direct, utilitarian, unpretentiously detailed and somewhat crudely

executed, HLKB's "loft insert" is its antithesis. The contrast is the design's greatest strength.

Higher than it is wide, the loft's pure, geometric void contains a container. Centered between continuous white walls, this container is surfaced in corncrib-inspired striations: strips of plywood, stained burgundy on their outer side only. Light is emitted from behind, between the strips. The container is luminous and seems to glow from within. A kind of box within a box, the container effectively divides the space of the void into useable discreet units. It houses what seems more like equipment than rooms.

Thus, within the box is a bath. The bath is accessed not—like a room—by a door, but by a sliding glass screen. Atop the box is not a bedroom, but a mattress concealed on three sides by the box itself. The box's walls open to reveal at its heart a stainless-steel refrigerator, support machine for 21st century life. On its dark side, nearest the entry, the box wall supports shelves and a desktop.

The box allows for spatial division without walls. It provides support for the loft's most remote and intimate space, an elevated platform of open metal grating accessed by an open-grate metal stair. The openness of horizontal surfaces permits continuity of the primary cubic void and allows daylight, however minimal, to wrap itself around the box. In this way, the clarity of the large rectilinear void is not diminished but heightened.

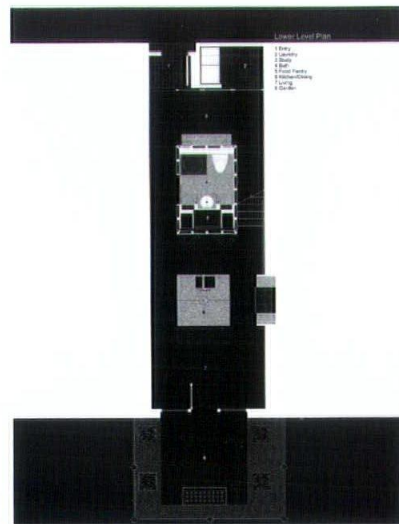
Reinforcing this clarity and establishing an effervescent atmosphere is the loft's "look, ma, no hands" attitude toward its constructiveness. Whereas a warehouse reveals its structural muscle, the loft

**Project:** RenSt Loft  
**Location:** Des Moines, IA  
**Architect:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**General Contractor:** Silent Rivers Design/Build  
**Electrical Engineer:** Brewer Engineering Consultants  
**Mechanical Engineer:** Brewer Engineering Consultants  
**Landscape Architect:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**Interior Designer:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**Photographer:** Bob Shimer/Hedrich Blessing

DANIEL NAEGELE



BOB SHIMER/HEDRICH BLESSING





conceals it. It has no columns. Its exposed concrete beams levitate, marking a module that adds intellectual order to the rectilinear void. The beam's obvious weight gives presence to the lightness of cubed space, rendering it intentional and palpable.

In the RenSt loft, pure and geometric space is offered for our aesthetic consideration. Dismissing conventional convenience in

favor of this aesthetic, it does not so much accommodate the way we live as question it.

—Daniel Naegele, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Architecture at Iowa State University.



Above: View across kitchen island cube to stove with shelving above.

Above: View into lower level bathroom housed in corner-inspired container.

Left: The loft in its entirety, looking from the south double-height window wall across its kitchen to the corner-inspired container.



## AWARD

AIA IOWA HONOR AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

CENTRAL STATES REGION  
CITATION AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE  
IN ARCHITECTURE

# Honorable Endeavors

## ARCHITECTURAL STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP TALENT AND COMBAT ELITISM

**JURY COMMENTS:** We commend the site plan and the relationship of building to context. A clear plan layered into three zones with a structural and mechanical "mast" in the middle. Circulation is to one side of the mast with passages through it to offices on the other side. The west façade skillfully deals with light and ventilation, clad with a building skin that is calm and beautiful. The interior contrasts with the minimalist building exterior. This is the work of a skillful, mature, and confident architect, thoughtful yet bold.

*A difficult site and multiple interests are skillfully brought together in the new Blank Honors Center at the University of Iowa.*

**Right:** The lighter volume of the spaces to the west contrasts with the solidity of the masonry service core.

**Below left:** The southern lobby entry is set back to provide an exterior passage from the public walkway on the west to the plaza on the east.

**Below right:** The plan shows the clear linear parti, with layered spaces from the public walkway on the left through the trees and lobby to the service core, with larger classrooms and the open plaza on the right.

**Project:** Blank Honors Center, University of Iowa  
**Location:** Iowa City, IA  
**Architect:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**General Contractor:** Miron Construction  
**Electrical Engineer:** Alvine and Associates  
**Mechanical Engineer:** Alvine and Associates  
**Structural Engineer:** Shuck-Britson Consulting Engineers  
**Energy Design Consultant:** The Weidt Group  
**Landscape Architect:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**Interior Designer:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**Photographer:** Farshid Assassi, Hon. AIA Iowa, Assassi Productions ©

JASON ALREAD

Honors programs are a critical part of recruiting the best students to a university. Since 1994 the number of honors programs has more than doubled nationally, and offers many state schools the ability to compete for students who might have otherwise gone to Ivy League institutions. By 1999 the University of Iowa's honors program had outgrown its Victorian house location on campus and wanted to partner with the Belin-Blank Center for Gifted and Talented Development, a K-12 program, to make a world-class honors center that could attract the best students and faculty. This new building would be located on the historic east side of campus, in one of the few remaining sites along the Anne Cleary pedestrian walkway. Part of the project goal was to create a special place of study for these elite students without creating the often-criticized elitism of many honors programs around the country. The resulting project by Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture grapples with this elusive problem in diverse ways.



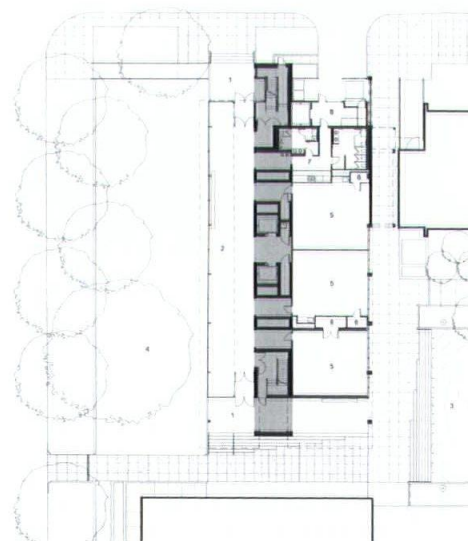
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The parti of the project is outstandingly clear, which the jury notes as the basic strength of the building. The central linear service core houses all of the opaque elements and separates the public lobbies, study areas and offices toward the walkway on the west and the larger classrooms and open office areas toward the parking plaza on the east side. While this is an effective organizational strategy it serves the ultimate purpose of trying to leave the areas facing the public as lightweight, open, and transparent volumes. This is the architectural strategy HLKB used to combat the enclosed and exclusive quality of many honors buildings. The structure and lower mullions are also kept dark to emphasize this transparency rather than focusing on the building's surface. Programmatically, public lobbies, study areas and classrooms are open to all students on the lower levels, with the Honors and Belin-Blank programs on the third through sixth floors. The compression of the building into thin layers that make a taller structure allows more exterior space at the pedestrian scale toward the walkway, and a building compatible with the height of the adjacent dormitory.

The interior open spaces are very light and minimal, allowing the masonry core to be evident throughout. The upper level of the west façade is clad with a sophisticated double skin that controls the amount of direct light allowed into the fully glazed spaces.



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FARSHID ASSASSI, HON. AIA IOWA, ASSASSI PRODUCTIONS ©

**Left:** The more transparent side volumes project past the central core and float above the lower public spaces. A balcony sits above the southern entry, replacing the open porch area from the Victorian house that housed the old honors program.

The details are carefully considered and the arrangement of the elements throughout is handled in a controlled and sensitive fashion.

It's evident why the project would be worthy of a design honor award; it exceeds expectations for what a building of this type can be. The question remains whether the architecture transmits the qualities that might combat the impression of elitism. The overall height, set-back from the public walkway and vertical striation of function create a hierarchy that may be seen as pulling away from the common public ground of campus, but the transparency strategies and

programmed public spaces connect the building back to the larger campus community. This is a tightrope of complicated and conflicting interests to negotiate, and the Blank Honors Center has tried to mitigate them admirably. The result is a restrained and beautiful structure that addresses issues both architectural and political with great skill.

—Jason Alread, AIA, is an assistant professor at Iowa State University and a partner in the Des Moines firm of Substance Architecture.



## AWARD

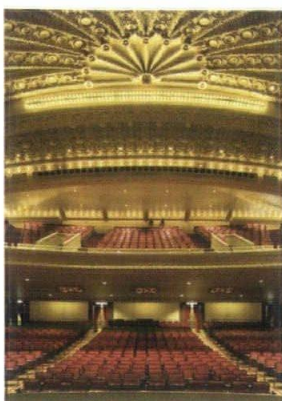
AIA IOWA  
RESTORATION AWARD

CENTRAL STATES REGION  
MERIT AWARD  
FOR RESTORATION  
ARCHITECTURE

# Re-enacted

## HOYT SHERMAN PLACE AUDITORIUM RESTORATION

**JURY COMMENTS:** *This was a great space in a distinguished building, preserved and enhanced by the architect. Installing modern HVAC, fire suppression, accessibility and security systems in a venerable building is no easy task. Here it was done exceptionally well.*



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Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck's awards for the Hoyt Sherman Place Auditorium restoration are well deserved. Modern infrastructure and contemporary code compliance is a barely audible whisper.

**Above:** The view from the stage with new stage lighting barely visible above the balcony.

**Above right:** First level plan with loading dock and storage additions.

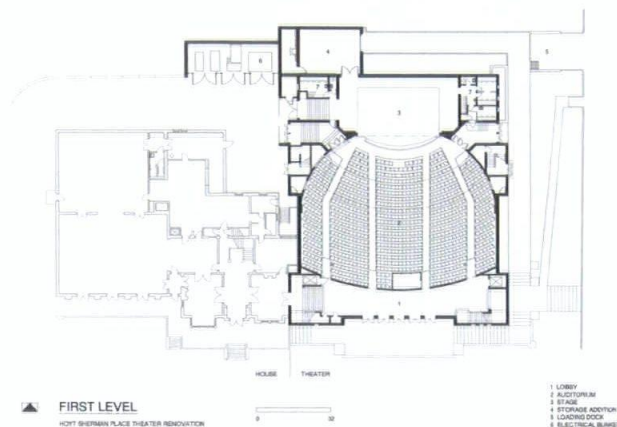
**Right:** The stage from the upper main floor.

**Project:** Hoyt Sherman Place Auditorium Restoration  
**Location:** Des Moines, IA  
**Architect:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**General Contractor:** The Weitz Company  
**Electrical Engineer:** KJWW Engineering Consultants  
**Mechanical Engineer:** KJWW Engineering Consultants  
**Structural Engineer:** Charles Saul Engineering  
**Photographer:** Farshid Assassi, Hon. AIA Iowa, Assassi Productions ©

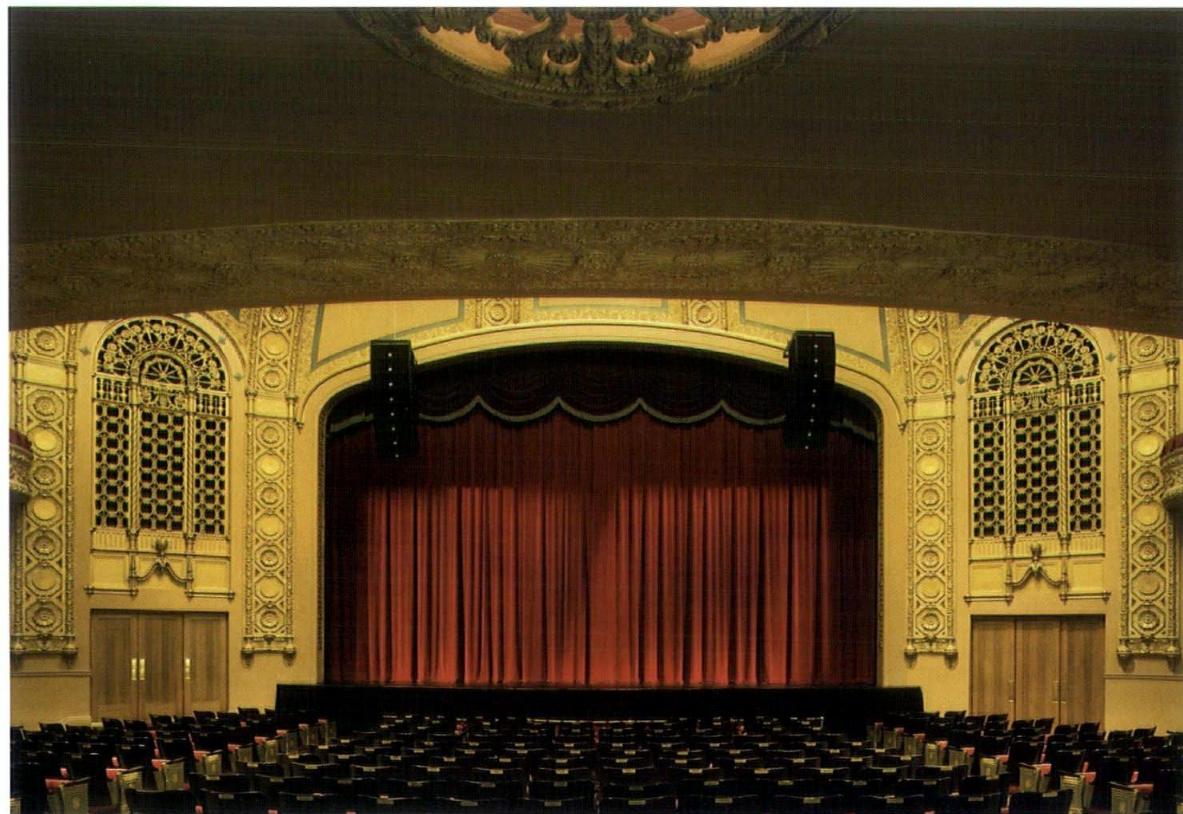
CLARE CARDINAL-PETT

The Hoyt Sherman Place Auditorium restoration by Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture (HLKB), completed in 2003, is the recipient of three well-deserved awards: a 2005 AIA Iowa Restoration Award, a 2005 Central States Region Merit Award for Restoration Architecture, and a 2004 award from the Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance. The project involved an existing 22,363 square feet and 1,922 square feet of new construction. The main auditorium was reconfigured to seat 1,188 and an additional 38 in box seats. The firm's main challenge was to maintain the historic 1923 ambience while upgrading the facility for state-of-the-art theatre production, modern environmental control, and contemporary code compliance.

The Hoyt Sherman Place is a collection of contiguous buildings that originated with the 1877 private mansion of Des Moines notable and Equitable Insurance Company founder, Hoyt Sherman. The total facility now includes later additions under the ownership of the Des Moines Women's Club. The club took over the property in 1907 (three years after Sherman's death) and immediately added the gallery space—the first

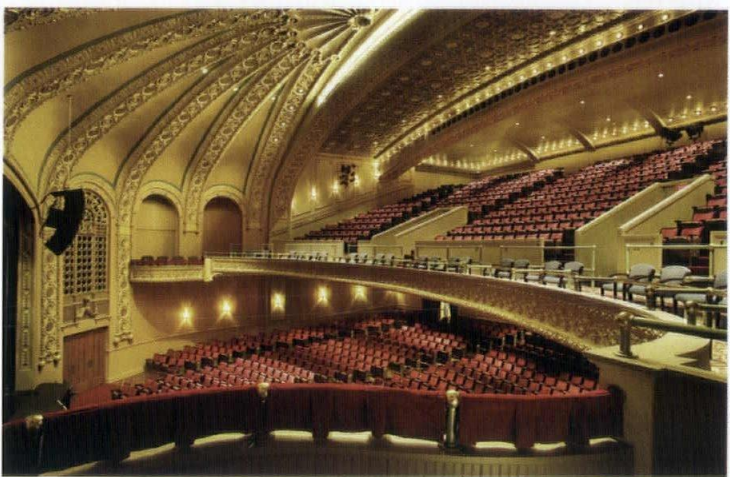


public art museum in Des Moines. In 1923 it built the auditorium. Amelia Earhart, Helen Keller, Grant Wood, and many others spoke to large audiences during this early period. The auditorium addition was designed by Kraetsch and Kraetsch in association with Norman Vorse. It had 850 fixed seats on the main level, 350 in the balcony and space for 70 in a ring of loges. The restored auditorium, put through the mill



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of contemporary fire codes and ADA requirements, lost only 44 seats. In an effort to preserve the original atmosphere, the historic seating was refurbished for contemporary use.

The project required improved costume, storage and equipment rooms, and the addition of a new loading dock and drive to accommodate semi trucks. All of this is backstage work. Restoration of three levels of public lobby space and the auditorium interior is front and center—a well-crafted mask of rococo plaster and paint. In the auditorium, the ceiling and proscenium arch ornamentation obscures the bulk of HLKB's work: first time air-conditioning, new electrical wiring, a sprinkler and security system, and updated sound, lighting, and stage rigging. The illusion is remarkable, but certainly not effortless.

Architectural skill of the sort demonstrated by HLKB in the Hoyt Sherman Place Auditorium restoration project should be celebrated and emulated, in its proper context. Such skill is perhaps a bit

dangerous when applied to a new building in the contemporary American city—a social, economic, and ecological condition that should discourage masquerade and pretense. It is important to note that theatergoers are now invited to revisit the past without examining their 21st century habits. While a similar sense of disengagement with the broader reality of everyday life in the United States was part of the culture among Des Moines' elite in 1923, the opulence of the auditorium reflects the actual affluence and optimism of a group of women who had recently won a place at the political table. This restoration project honors that moment in history.

—Clare Cardinal-Pett is the director of graduate education, Department of Architecture, Iowa State University.

**Above left: Box seat view of main floor and balcony before restoration.**

**Below left: Box seat view of restored main floor and balcony.**

**Above right: Lobby before restoration.**

**Below right: Restored lobby.**



## AWARD

AIA IOWA HONOR AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

# Precision Meets Tradition

A COLLEGE GYMNASIUM MORPHS INTO A FINE ARTS CENTER AT CORNELL COLLEGE

*JURY COMMENTS: A brave remodeling of an historic building for adaptive reuse. The architect mined everything possible from the historic fabric, adding to it creatively and giving us the feeling of being in an old building and a modern building at the same time. We commend the care and elegance of the solution.*

*HLKB transforms an historic building at an Iowa college, creating a dialogue between eras.*

**Right:** HLKB's transformation involved little change to the Hall's exterior aside from restoration and maintenance.

**Below:** Partition walls within the old gymnasium spaces are intentionally minimal and clearly separated from the historic structure.

Built in 1909, McWethy Hall served as Cornell College's main gymnasium for over 50 years, and then, when new facilities were built for men's athletics, as the "women's gym" until the early 1990s. Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture's (HLKB) work to turn the building into a new, comprehensive arts facility addressed both the building's historic fabric, and the necessarily radical transformation necessary to provide studio, classroom, and office space for the art course work.

Cornell's "one course at a time" policy means that its arts facilities are intensively used in short sessions. Transitions from classroom to studio were important, as was a sense of respect for the largely timber structure. The long span spaces of the gymnasium were converted to loft-like work and exhibition spaces, taking advantage of the dramatic volumes and exposed wooden structural members to draw subtle parallels between old and new functions, as well as between old and new construction. The wholesale transformation of the building's program gave HLKB license for bold interventions, resulting in a carefully thought out but nevertheless strong expression of contemporary materials and forms within the existing shell. Two large stair towers were kept and renovated as primary circulatory elements, providing a connection between previous classes of athletes and today's art students through the building's historic fabric.

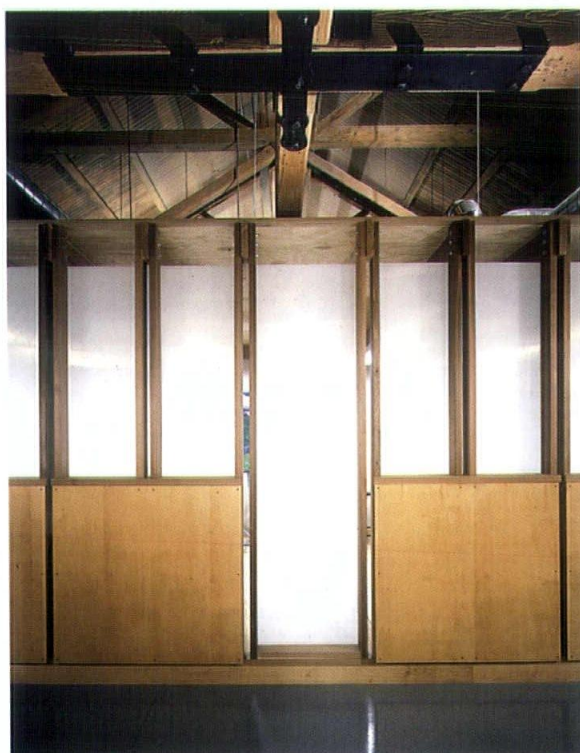


Contrasts between old and new play out at a number of scales. Glass and light wood were inserted deftly into the heavy timber structure, defining offices in particular by a sharp transition in palette. Minimal plaster walls in the galleries offer a contrast in texture, while emphasizing the rough texture of the ceiling structures above. And, perhaps most importantly, the exterior volume of the building's front was restored to its original condition, offering only hints of the transformations within. This very sharp division between existing and new represents a productive though risky strategy; rather than defer to the intense craftsmanship and stoic massing of the original, HLKB's approach invites comparison and dialogue. Highlighting the distinctions between a venerable, hand-crafted building and new elements that are inevitably machine-made could conceivably highlight the distinction in care between the two. But here, the practice's well-known obsessions with detail and materials pay off—the awards jury recognized the "care and elegance" of the solution and the achievement of a rare balance—"the feeling of being in an old building and a modern building at the same time."

HLKB has had increasing success with this sort of project, as their combination of careful detailing with a chameleon-like palette of subdued warm and cool tones seems at home in a variety of older, more richly textured contexts. In this case, the high-wire act of gentle confrontation between two eras, and between two ways of building, feels effortless but tangible. The firm's continued work on the campus suggests that this careful juxtaposition has, in fact, been appreciated by the college.

—Thomas Leslie, AIA, is an assistant professor of architecture at Iowa State University.

**Project:** McWethy Hall  
Renovation, Cornell  
College  
**Location:** Mount Vernon, IA  
**Architect:** Herbert Lewis  
Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**General Contractor:** Shive-  
Hattery Engineers  
**Electrical Engineer:** Alvine  
and Associates  
**Mechanical Engineer:** Alvine  
and Associates  
**Structural Engineer:** Shuck-  
Britson Consulting  
Engineers  
**Interior Designer:** Herbert  
Lewis Kruse Blunck  
Architecture  
**Photographer:** Bob  
Shimer/Hedrich Blessing



THOMAS LESLIE



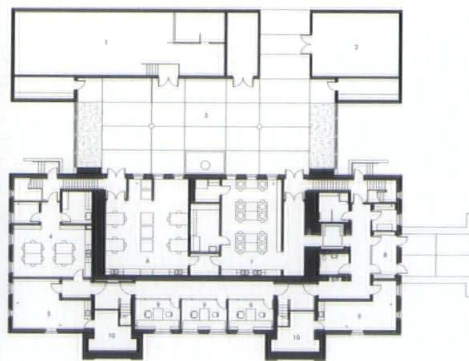


Interior galleries also reflect the tectonic distinctions between historic fabric and new construction.

BOB SHIMER/HEDRICH BLESSING



BOB SHIMER/HEDRICH BLESSING



Above: The plan of McWethy Hall transforms the old gymnasium in the center into loft-like studio and work space.

Left: Conference and office spaces adopt HLKB's recognizable house style, contrasting planes of simply expressed material with the rich structural articulation of the original.



## AWARD

AIA IOWA MERIT AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

# An Ames Icon

## A NEW BUILDING AND EXPANSION TO IOWA STATE CENTER

*JURY COMMENTS: The large, unencumbered interior space is remarkable, and results from moving the structure to the outside. Thin edges and simple planes create a luminous envelope.*

The indoor practice facility at Iowa State University is a recruiting asset for the athletic program and a change to the neighborhood landscape.

**Left:** The training facility was crafted and situated on the site with the rest of Iowa State Center in mind. A style and material palette consistent with C.Y. Stephens Auditorium, Hilton Coliseum and Jack Trice Stadium was used.

**Right:** The goal for the new building on the landscape was not to trump Jack Trice Stadium.

**Below:** The interior space had to be uninterrupted, for obvious reasons. This was accomplished using a 420-foot mono-truss, which was located over the roof system.

**Project:** Bergstrom Indoor Training Facility, Iowa State University  
**Location:** Ames, IA  
**Architect:** RDG Planning & Design  
**General Contractor:** The Weitz Company  
**Mechanical Contractor:** ACI Mechanical  
**Electrical Contractor:** DeVries Electric, Inc.  
**Civil Engineer:** Snyder and Associates  
**Electrical Engineer:** KJWW Engineering  
**Mechanical Engineer:** KJWW Engineering  
**Structural Engineer:** Charles Saul Engineering  
**Photographer:** Farshid Assassi, Hon. AIA Iowa, Assassi Productions ©

M. MONICA GILLEN

The Bergstrom Indoor Training Facility in Ames, Iowa, has changed the rules of the practice game and how that game is played by Iowa State University athletics.

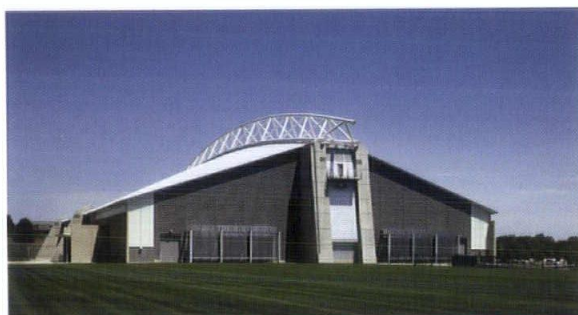
The charge for RDG Planning & Design was to build a state-of-the-art facility that would accommodate an entire football field for athletes and coaches representing a variety of sports—one where there would be no regrets once the last of the dozens of lightning rods was in place.

The initial building solution was a glorified Butler building and the site was a given—with inherent constraints, given its proximity to the Jacobson Athletic Building. However, through the design process, numerous building systems were changed.

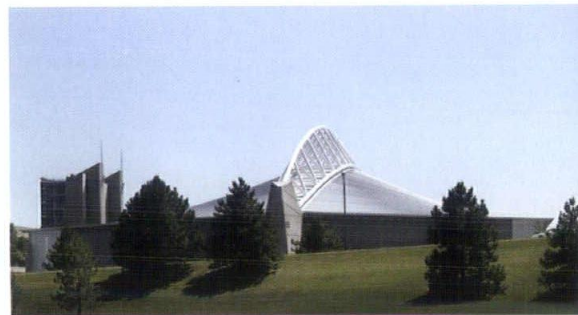
Outwardly, this building is a structural feat. The interior space had to be uninterrupted, for obvious reasons. This was accomplished using a 420-foot mono-truss, which was located over the roof system. The three linear pieces of the mono-truss are comprised of half-inch thick, two-foot diameter gas pipe. The inside height at the north end is 30 feet above grade while the south end is 75 feet. This vertical clearance allows for practicing field goal kicks.

The resultant roof loads are transferred to grade via cast-in-place concrete abutments. As these vertical support elements were installed, they seemed complex as shapes, however its formal overture had more to do with load-distribution than stylistic intent.

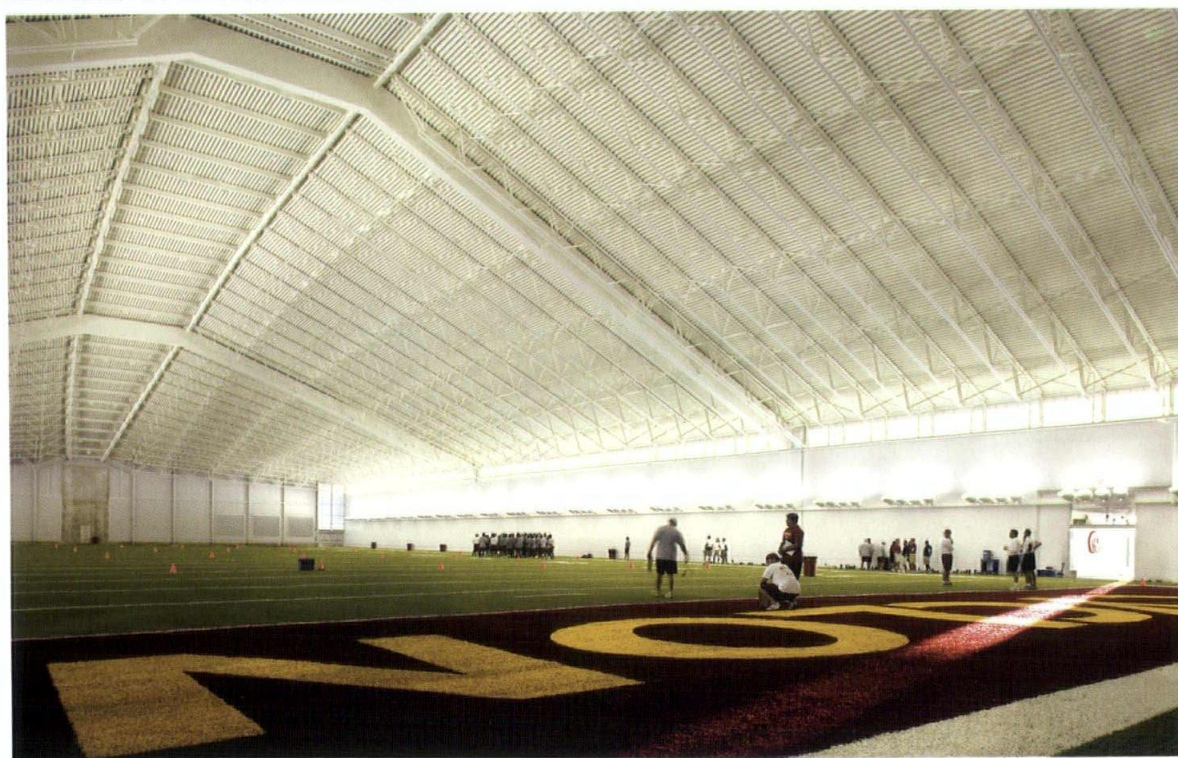
The east and west walls of the building are comprised



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## AWARD

AIA IOWA MERIT AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

# A Center at the Gateway

HLKB ADDS BALANCE TO GRINNELL'S ECLECTIC ARCHITECTURAL COLLECTION

*JURY COMMENTS: Very well composed plan and massing, careful attention to the clarity of structure and the texture of materials. We applaud the massing of the project within its context.*

*The Chrystal Center finds common ground in diverse styles, programs, and materials.*

*Right: A mixed palette of warm and cool calls out the Chrystal Center as an architectural negotiation between building types on the Grinnell campus.*

*Below right: The center's front porch also serves as a primary circulatory element, gently lifting prospective students to a second-floor panorama of the campus.*

**Project:** John Crystal Center, Grinnell College  
**Location:** Grinnell, IA  
**Architect:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**General Contractor:** Neumann Brothers, Inc.  
**Electrical Engineer:** Baker Electric  
**Mechanical Engineer:** Waldinger Corporation  
**Structural Engineer:** Charles Saul Engineering  
**Landscape Architect:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**Interior Designer:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**Photographer:** Bob Shimer/Hedrich Blessing

THOMAS LESLIE

Grinnell College occupies a slightly uneasy position between tradition and innovation, both in its curriculum and its collection of collegiate buildings. It is firmly rooted in the small Iowa town that is its namesake, yet it aims to cast its graduates into a larger, global scale. Likewise, it possesses a diverse and at times unharmonious collection of buildings ranging from the nineteenth century Richardsonian Goodnow Building to the unapologetically modern postwar work of Walter Netsch.

Recent attempts to find a harmonious middle ground between the campus' varying architectural styles have had mixed results, so the opportunity to design a flagship building at the campus' primary entry was a slightly perilous one for Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture (HLKB). A strict nod to the abstract forms and cool palette of the Netsch buildings would have been very much in tune with the firm's stylistic proclivities, but would have taken sides in an aesthetic argument that demanded negotiation.

The Chrystal Center thus walks a very fine line, picking up materials and formal strategies from the campus' older buildings while integrating geometrical and material cues from its more recent ones. It gestures to the campus with a "front porch" borrowed from nearby nineteenth century houses—but the porch is composed of exposed steel beams, painted a stark white. Likewise, the massing is broken into four strongly articulated bays, yet these abstract gestures are rendered in richly textured stone walls that seem to speak to the Romanesque examples on campus. As a final contradiction, the strong linear façade is capped by a peaked roof that explicitly recalls its more domestic and antiquated counterparts.

Within, the building accommodates a welcome center for new arrivals and visitors, and offices and counter space for the admissions, financial aid, and registrar departments. Prospective students are ushered up a generous stair to a second-floor view over the campus, while current students are swept under the stair to the more prosaic offices in the rear of the building. Both routes run through the front porch, which provides architectural unity to these two different populations. The palette inside maintains a now-expected middle ground between modernist steel and nods to more traditional wood and stone materials. This, of course, recalls Grinnell's position between its agrarian locale and its more worldly ambitions, a subtle framing of the admissions discussions that occur under its shed roof.

Jurors applauded the center's contextually driven massing, warm texture, and clearly expressed structure. That these three themes are contained in a single project speaks to an intense effort on HLKB's part to understand



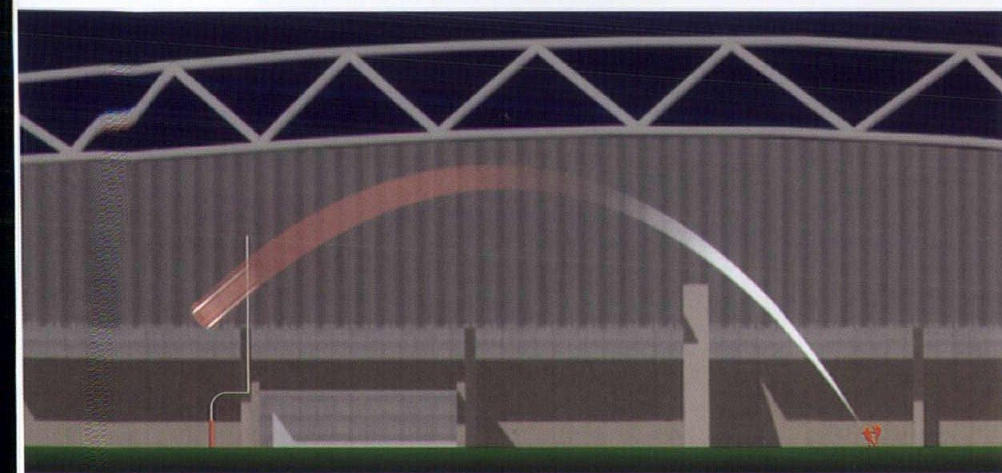




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**Above:** Buttresses support the structure and reinforce the elements of neighboring buildings. The entrance placement provides an easy way in from other points in the athletic complex.

**Left:** With the mono-truss over the structure, the interior height clearance allows for practicing field goal kicks.



of an insulated concrete precast panel system with clerestory lighting. This day-lighting system is located at the top of the concrete wall just beneath the roof edge. Additional interior lighting is provided by an indirect system, which bounces light off the roof deck and back on to the field, thus providing uniform color and reducing glare so the players don't lose track of the ball.

The walls at the north and south ends are made up of a corrugated metal panel system. The space is heated and actively ventilated but not air-conditioned. Air is circulated using nine-foot diameter through-wall fans at the north and south ends. These fans are located near grade and ventilation takes place down low so the athletes can feel the air movement on the field.

An artificial turf material makes up the 100-yard field surface. Its resiliency makes it more like natural turf and

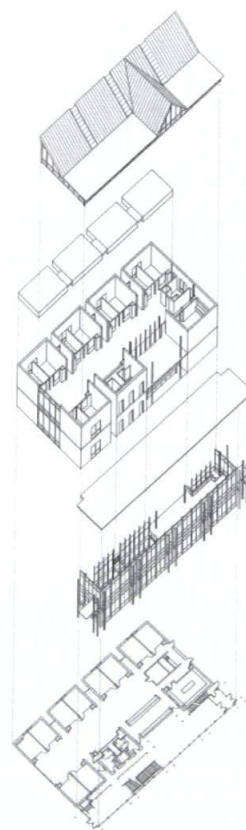
requires some care, such as raking, but always looks like a freshly mowed lawn. Laid down like carpet, it is scattered with thousands of pounds of sand and ground rubber to help absorb shock, adding another element of safety for the athletes.

Successful implementation can be measured in large part if the user's needs are met. Drills and practices can now be scheduled without regard for weather. And those who commissioned the project are satisfied.

"It is a state-of-the-art training facility and I've not seen a better facility in college or the NFL," Iowa State head football coach Dan MacCarney said. MacCarney said the space was built right the first time with flexibility.

—M. Monica Gillen lives and works in Ames.





**Above left:** The steel and glass front porch of the Chrystal Center.

**Above right:** The center's massing is a careful weaving of articulated office blocks and an overall linear circulation structure.

**Left:** The south elevation of the center reveals a layering from front porch (right) to more private offices (left).



the building's role in its aesthetic and functional contexts. The Chrystal Center now forms the visitor's first impression of the college, setting up dialogues between the abstract and the tangible, the old and the new, and the challenging and the comfortable. All of these serve as neat encapsulations of the building's ultimate purpose as Grinnell's introductory structure.

—Thomas Leslie, AIA, is an assistant professor of architecture at Iowa State University.



## AWARD

AIA IOWA MERIT AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE  
IN ARCHITECTURE

# Ethno Merit

CONTAINING THE RITUALISTIC AFFAIRS OF A PEOPLE

*JURY COMMENTS: Irreverently bold. The massing of this church on a prairie refers to icons of church and campanile, yet it also refers to the barns and silos of its region. We appreciate the effort to respond to the client's need for function and symbol.*

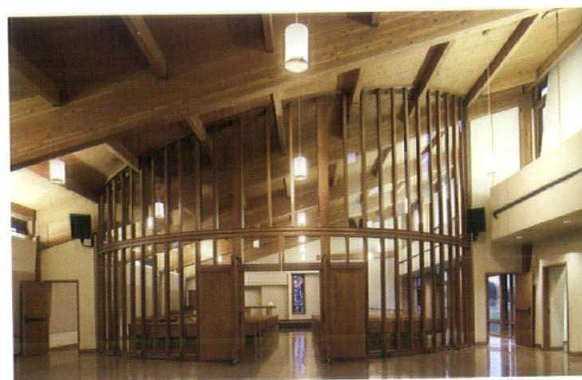
St. Paul Lutheran Church is the faith center for a rapidly expanding congregation made up of approximately 150 families. It is an evangelical structure for worship and prayer. Its mission: Every member a missionary.

**Right:** A view into the sanctuary through the fellowship hall.

**Bottom left:** The interior of the intended chapel beneath the tower which is now used as a meeting room.

Originally located in downtown Winterset, St. Paul Lutheran Church now rests on the northern edge of town against the rural horizon of Madison County.

The programmatic research leading up to the construction of this new facility began in 2001. Enjoined by architects Kevin Nordmeyer and Ash Lettow of RDG Planning & Design, the parish council began the effort with a series of informational meetings. Once the base criteria for the necessary spaces and their sequence was defined, the architects began their inquiry into the cultural conditions surrounding the individual spaces (sanctuary, sacristy, chapel, fellowship hall, kitchen, nursery, classrooms and offices), rituals (the sign of the cross, prayer, song, oral lessons and mealtime) and associated artifacts (eternal light, body and blood of Christ, altar, chalice, bread basket, crucifer, baptismal font, lectern, seating, hymnal, musical instruments,



chasuble, alb and stole) specific to this people and their doctrine. This analytic discovering included attending various worship services and participating in several parish functions. These engagements not only aided in furthering the architect's cultural comprehension of St. Paul's fellowship, it established a level of trust from which the architectural solution would stem.

With an accumulated body of insight, the architects began to synthesize their findings. The cataloguing of such data within the architectural discipline tends, almost immediately, toward a solution developed in drawing and model. These results were then taken back to the council and ultimately the congregation via a series of input meetings. These meetings were conducted in an effort to provoke, through discussion, notions relative to established values and meanings particular to the proposition. As a result, affirmations and challenges to initial findings arose.

This methodology culminated in a giving campaign which was orchestrated by the church on the future grounds in the spring of 2002. The derived solution was laid out on the property. Chairs were set up in the sanctuary and a barbecue was positioned in the kitchen. This manner of prototyping the scale and sequence of spaces on site served as a critique of both the plan and its missionate intent. With the recognition that a people gathered together in prayer and meal on the prairie constituted church, the role of the architect was revealed; to make a container for fellowship. This was executed using ordinary types of material to frame a lens that would deepen each member's engagement. The chapel and crucifer would tower out front (more or less) as symbol.

An architecture that emerges from this sort of honest working relationship has merit.

**Project:** St. Paul Lutheran Church  
**Location:** Winterset, IA  
**Architect:** RDG Planning & Design  
**General Contractor:** Bryan Crow Construction  
**Electrical Engineer:** ME Group  
**Mechanical Engineer:** RDG Planning & Design  
**Structural Engineer:** Korpela Engineering  
**Electrical Contractor:** Armstrong Electric  
**Mechanical Contractor:** Martensdale Plumbing and Heating  
**Landscape Architect:** Landscape Architecture Consultants  
**Interior Designer:** RDG Planning & Design  
**Photographer:** Farshid Assassi, Hon. AIA Iowa, Assassi Productions ©

PETE GOCHÉ



FARSHID ASSASSI, HON. AIA IOWA, ASSASSI PRODUCTIONS ©

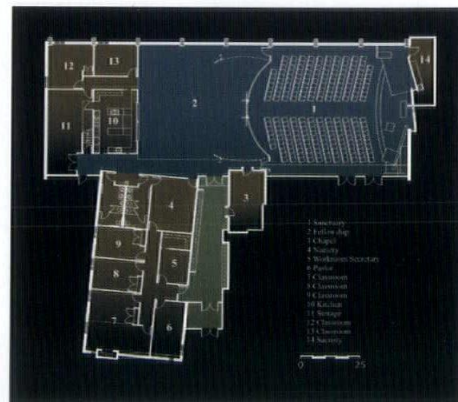




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**Left:** A view of the expansion armature used for peak load services.

**Below:** The solution, as derived at through plan and sequence.



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**Above:** The lens provides aperture to the sanctuary while the tower stands out front as mere symbol.

**pro-gram:** a design guide developed in the preliminary phases of architectural design. It is the resultant data collected and interpreted by means of a comprehensive method of analysis/ synthesis in effort to: (1) associate or affiliate (oneself) closely with a people; (2) describe by enumerating the characteristics or qualities of a people; (3) convey information about a people with respect to the phenomenological make-up of their customs and values. (Pete Goché, *Place setting: Architect as cultural inclusionist*, Iowa State University, 2005, 4.)

This ethno-specific effort, though limited in scope, is entitled to commendation. St. Paul Lutheran Church stands, then, as testimony to an underlying fellowship that stems from both its mission as well as that of its architect; to participate in and contain the ritualistic affairs of a people.

—Pete Goché is a cultural inclusionist native to rural Iowa.



## AWARD

AIA IOWA MERIT AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

# I Can See Clearly Now

A CLEAN, WELL-LIGHTED SPACE

*JURY COMMENTS: A beautifully quiet and thoughtful reworking of an existing bank. The architect evaluated what was best in the existing building, and quietly added to it. The entry sequence, for example, is as economical as it is bold.*

*A glass and aluminum addition along with a much needed renovation employs elements expressing order and precision to exemplify business principles of the institution.*

**Right: The floor plan illustrates the addition attached to the north elevation of the original building with the open quality of the new design employed throughout the entire bank.**

**Below left: Suburban architecture is vastly improved with a modern composition of materials to create an atmosphere of transparency and cohesiveness to customers and clients.**

**Below right: A conference room enclosed by white glass walls provides privacy, but this is no separate secretive inner sanctum. The somewhat conservative furniture, while out of place in a high end office building, seems rather appropriate within a bank setting.**

**Project:** Bankers Trust North Branch  
**Location:** Des Moines, IA  
**Architect:** Baldwin White Architects, PC  
**General Contractor:** Graham Construction  
**Structural Engineer:** Korpela Engineering  
**Landscape Architect:** Brian Clark and Associates  
**Photographer:** Cameron Campbell, AIA ©

MARK E. BLUNCK

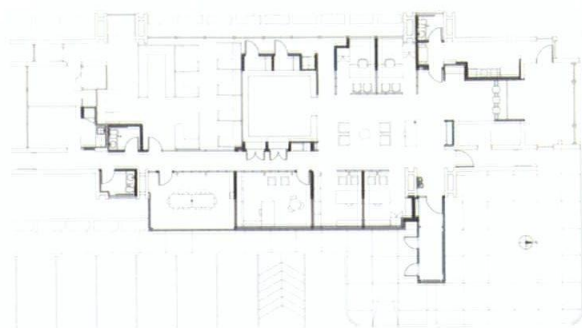
**A**mong commercial building types, a bank is a particularly unique combination of several ingredients that must coalesce to impart a high degree of trust to its customers. A well-designed bank merges the need for security and the psychological imperatives of cohesiveness and transparency with a design to establish a bond with individuals who have permitted the institution to handle their life financial assets. These qualities are of utmost importance and any successful plan to enhance an existing bank building should serve to further this confidence level.

Across the street from Merle Hay Mall Shopping Center stands Bankers Trust North Branch, a well-composed, modest, and unassuming structure with a recent addition and renovation by Baldwin White Architects. According to Kevin White of the Des Moines firm, "the old space had been reconfigured several times over the years creating a general mess of things. We also had to work around a large existing vault, but the bank definitely needed more room. It's also easier to retrofit a carefully done building to begin with as it's easier to manipulate and rework things. The public understands what is there and what can work better. If the original building has good qualities to begin with then a good architect will draw from that precedent." There seems to be a standard among certain commercial buildings, however, that they must fall prey to numerous remodels with each succeeding ill-planned project compounding all previous mistakes. Clarity is then needed to rectify these unfortunate tendencies.

The existing 5,000-square-foot brick clad bank presents a common suburban design standard of competent but uninspiring architecture specifically created to satisfy the client's needs with no further elaboration required. Of course, this presented a challenge to the new architects of engaging this older building with a new 1,000-square-foot addition without imposing a dramatic architectural statement. The solution of a transparent aluminum and glass structure enables the new architecture to contrast and complement the rectilinear forms and materials employed on exterior and interior spaces.



CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA ©



The first indication of a modern addition is the entry vestibule of vertical gridded sections with dimensions that will repeat on interior spaces throughout the addition and renovated areas. The original bank utilized a six by six foot building module and this is reiterated in the floor patterning and carried through with the new interiors organized around this template. This modular system of aluminum frame window walls on both sides also allows natural illumination to enter from two directions to bring light into the building during the entire workday.

The concept of openness and clarity is enhanced with 12-foot-high glass partition walls situated throughout the bank and serving to enliven the spaces signifying







Rectilinear forms and ceiling heights ranging from 10 to 14 feet both unify and differentiate the spaces to clearly indicate work flow and customer interaction.

CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA ©

honesty and trust between the institution and its clients. The rhythmic patterning of this clear glazing also denotes precise order and composition that is hopefully reflected in the bank's business practices. If any institution in contemporary society needed to impart a sense of high principles—a bank would certainly rank near the top.

—Mark E. Blunck, after working at two Bay Area architectural firms for over four years, is back at Oakland City Hall. "Your dreams were your ticket out. And you may ask yourself—"Well...how did I get here?" Thanks to John Sebastian and David Byrne.



CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA ©

Left: Interior partitions dimensionally identical to exterior walls denote a desired quality of transparency for open interaction between staff and customers.



## AWARD

AIA IOWA HONORABLE  
MENTION AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

# Adding It Up

A COMMUNITY CENTER JOINS VARIED PARTS INTO AN ATTRACTIVE WHOLE

*JURY COMMENTS: We applaud the small community that built a building with great presence and quality. Carefully organized with moments of delight.*

*The Huxley Citizens' Community Center combined multiple city offices, a recreation center and library into a significant building that has become the city's hub.*

**Right:** A main staircase and elevators provide access to the Huxley library, restrooms, a walking and running track, and an exercise area on the second floor of the Citizens' Community Center.

**Below:** The randomly spaced, "punched-out" windows in the zinc-sided recreation center give runners and joggers a variety of views to ease monotonous workouts.

If "The whole is more than the sum of its parts," as Aristotle is credited with saying, it is the architect's job to ensure the whole is well structured and appealing.

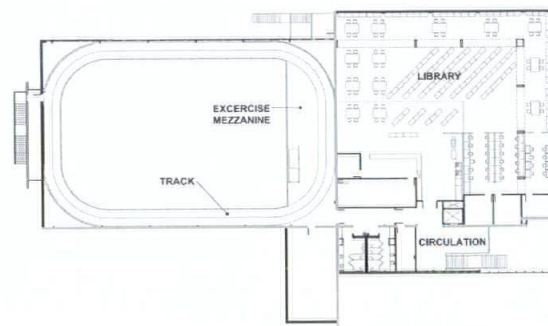
The parts of the Citizens' Community Center in Huxley, Iowa, are diverse: city offices, a public library and a recreation center, complete with gymnasium, racquetball court, and fitness equipment. Yet, Architects Wells Kastner Schipper totaled these elements into a whole that's "carefully organized with moments of delight," as the AIA Iowa Design Excellence Award jury noted.

"The most important thing about the building is it has distinct parts and we were able to join those distinct parts," says Douglas A. Wells, AIA, whose West Des Moines firm designed the center. Each component has its own character, inside and out, but they're knit into a creative, attractive form.

The building is a huge step up from Huxley's old facilities. For decades, City Hall was an aging, one-story brick house. Officials wanted a more professional feel in their new offices, Wells says, so the design incorporates a business-like, comfortable reception area and lobby.

The Huxley Public Library started in the old City Hall basement before moving twice and landing in a professional building. In the community center, the library is "white and well organized," Wells says. "How the light comes in is really important. It's much more subdued than the other parts and has a nice high-volume space with clerestory windows."

The city never had a true recreation center before the 3C, as Huxley residents call it. The new facility has an open feeling, with a mezzanine running track and high



**Project:** Citizens' Community Center  
**Location:** Huxley, IA  
**Architect:** Architects Wells Kastner Schipper  
**General Contractor:** Woodruff Construction  
**Civil Engineer:** Snyder and Associates  
**Electrical Engineer:** Pulley and Associates  
**Mechanical Engineer:** Pulley and Associates  
**Structural Engineer:** James W. Wilson  
**Landscape Architect:** Snyder and Associates  
**Interior Designer:** Architects Wells Kastner Schipper  
**Photographer:** Timothy Hursley

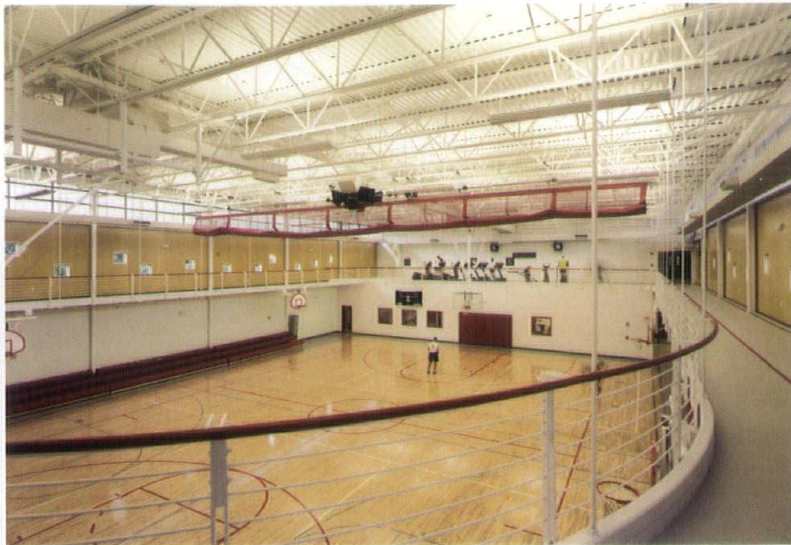
THOMAS R. O'DONNELL







TIMOTHY HURSLEY



TIMOTHY HURSLEY



TIMOTHY HURSLEY

**Above left:** The lobby's steel siding, unusual lighting and floating staircase distinguish its function as the center's nerve center. The siding helps establish the character of city offices.

**Above right:** The two-story space, high windows and mezzanine running track give the recreation center an open feeling. Exercise equipment is located at one end of the mezzanine.

**Left:** The community center's many functions intersect at the main lobby. All the building's destinations can be reached from this two-story, glass-enclosed space.

windows on the north and south walls. The track provides one of the moments of delight the jury cited: A series of small windows at random heights. "They create little vignette views" for joggers and walkers, Wells says.

The building's parts also have their own exterior character. The library and city offices have a formal brick façade. The recreation center is clad in dark zinc and juts from the back. On the south face, a racquetball court and lounge are housed in an arcing structure covered in stainless steel. The center also connects to the high school on the south.

"Those parts do their own thing, they are all centered on the lobby, which joins and connects the architecture of the different parts," Wells said. The glass-enclosed

lobby provides additional moments of delight. A pier sided with stainless steel continues to the interior, where it's dotted with randomly-placed jelly jar lights.

"The lobby was real important," Wells said. It's "a two-story space, so you can see when you walk in all your destination choices."

In its Citizens' Community Center, Huxley's roughly 2,800 residents have a place to exercise, study, and gather that larger cities would envy. Officials, Wells says, were "really interested in having the design be significant." The award says they succeeded.

—Thomas R. O'Donnell is an Urbandale writer specializing in science, technology and architecture.



## AWARD

AIA IOWA HONORABLE  
MENTION AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
ARCHITECTURE

# You Can Bank On That

## ARCHITECTURAL INTERACTION

*JURY COMMENTS: A well-coordinated larger building with consistency of plan to elevation details, some moments of great skill in the façade and details.*

*Topped by an ethereal glass encased atrium, the bank achieves a level of design and material refinement to complement and enhance surrounding architecture, both for the client and the public.*

**Right:** The eight-story canyon-like atrium brings natural light into the workspaces at all levels and the articulated wall details are much more pronounced in the new building.

**Below:** The new nine-story project is situated across from older buildings for the same client and separated by a full-length and full-height corridor.

If there is one successful business constant in the financial district of Des Moines, then it must be the banking and insurance industries. Throughout economic cycles these corporations seem to survive despite downturns in other sectors and even the devastating savings and loan scandals. Since many of these institutions became of age in the postwar era, they commonly gravitated towards modern architecture as a symbol of a powerful and rational corporate image. The two most significant postwar modernism buildings in the downtown area are the American Federal Savings and Loan building by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, 1962, and the American Republic Insurance Company, Skidmore Owings & Merrill, 1965. These architectural works exemplify the precise design approach with the buildings reflective of the business principles practiced within.

While the general public may not pay too much attention to this building type on a daily basis, they do appreciate good design when something new comes along and is a pleasing contextual fit within its immediate surroundings. Fortunately, for Wells Fargo, the Financial Skyview Building by Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture (HLKB) is designed to complement



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the existing company campus and surrounding structures.

Project architect Brett Mendenhall of HLKB noted that the design approach to the new nine-story building was to fit within the existing Wells Fargo campus architecture. This was accomplished by using the proportions of the other buildings and to elaborate on the vertical organizational concepts of all the surrounding architecture. This contextual endeavor was enhanced with a glass enclosed stair on the north façade along with elements on the western side that create a minimalist connection to the Hubble Building. Since the new building has no recesses or projections along the wall, and a planar configuration at these dimensions would be perceived as bland, spandrels are pushed away

from the skin to articulate the façade. Another important element is vertical fins that are hung on the curtain wall for sun shading and further increasing differentiation on the exterior.

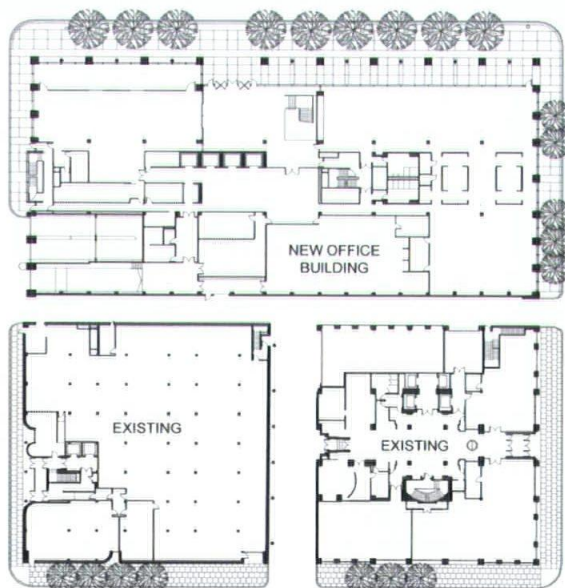
The pronounced geometric form visible to motorists heading downtown over the viaduct is the glass atrium situated atop the building. This 90-foot-diameter enclosure provides access to an outdoor gathering area and serves as space for arrival and food celebrations. An elliptical training center situated west of the atrium opens onto the public space, providing interaction for staff and visitors.

Since the building was planned to engage the public, a portion of the main floor space was reserved as a unique destination for the downtown population. A conventional retail business such as specialty clothing or boutique items was regarded as pretentious and the architects wanted to attract people into something special. The Des Moines Art Center Store, located to the right of the lobby, features products related to art, architecture and design, along with products connected to current exhibits. The rather sparse lobby is a flexible open area for intimate music events and gatherings and now features an exact reproduction of the Sol LeWitt wall painting in the Art Center's I. M. Pei addition, *Forms Derived from the Cube (25 Variations)*, recreated by the artist and his staff—another perfect and true blending of art and architecture for the public.

—Mark E. Blunck has been contributing his enthusiasm for architecture and design, and writing skills learned at Lincoln High School in Des Moines, to Iowa Architect magazine for nearly 20 years.

**Project:** Wells Fargo Skyview Building  
**Location:** Des Moines, IA  
**Architect:** Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture  
**General Contractor:** The Weitz Company  
**Electrical Engineer:** KJWW Engineering Consultants  
**Mechanical Engineer:** KJWW Engineering Consultants  
**Structural Engineer:** Charles Saul Engineering  
**Photographer:** Farshid Assasi, Hon. AIA Iowa, Assasi Productions ©

MARK E. BLUNCK







FARSHID ASSASSI, HON. AIA IOWA, ASSASSI PRODUCTIONS ©

**Left:** In order to create an articulated exterior, building elements are pulled away from the curtain wall.

**Below:** The skywalk connection is fully glazed with structural glass components creating a fully transparent pathway.



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**Left:** The very impressive circular atrium encloses mechanical equipment and provides open space for events and appears as a low beacon at night.



20  
05

# Central States Region Awards



ROBERT SHIMER/HEDRICH BLESSING

## McClendon Athletic Center, Heritage Hall School

*Honor Award for Excellence in Architecture*

Oklahoma City, OK  
Elliott+Associates Architects

### Jury comments:

*Very strong, sculptural and dynamic front façade. The jury loves the contrast at the entry where the punched metal 'tube' punctures the solid façade with light around it—a brilliant way to create an opening in a wall. The interior is well organized and understandable for a complex program of many uses and spaces. The visibility and flow of the interior creates a social place where students can see and be seen.*



AUSE O'BRIEN

## Alberici Corporation Headquarters

*Honor Award for Excellence in Architecture*

St. Louis, MO  
Mackey Mitchell Associates

### Jury comments:

*This project should also get the "doing the right thing" award. It shows how a large utilitarian space can be saved and turned into a great human workplace. Carving away the middle to create a courtyard is a nice touch, maintains the connected structures and highlights the beauty of simple steel trusses. The commitment to sustainable design and invention is a great model for others. By disassembling this factory warehouse and adding new key elements to it, the second use of a building type became evident. The sawtooth addition, while shaped to aim south, is not as raw and adventurous as the existing building.*





BOB SHIMER/HEDRICH-BLESSING

## Kimmel Theatre/Youngker Hall and Armstrong Hall Renovation, Cornell College

*Honor Award for Excellence in Architecture*

Mount Vernon, IA

Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture

### Jury comments:

*This modern yet modest addition to a traditional campus building demonstrates the skill of the architect at introducing new architecture that truly fits the campus. The use of matching brick, white frame and columns and the stair plinth all help create a unified whole. The jury especially likes the sculptural glass and steel entry element that serves as a modern marquee. The connection of the two structures with the lobby in the gap emphasizes the beauty of the new and old structures.*



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## Westside Business Park

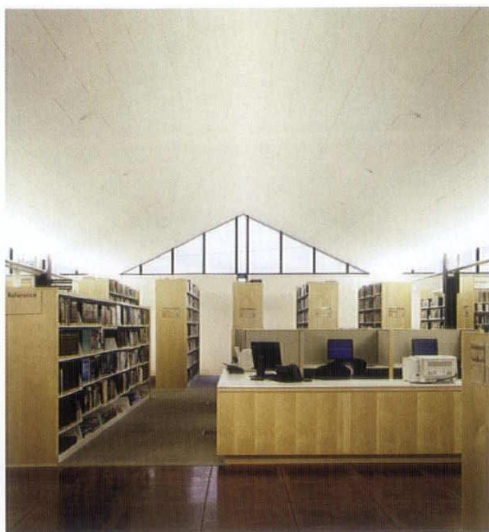
*Honor Award for Excellence in Architecture*

Kansas City, MO

International Architects Atelier

### Jury comments:

*This building renovation was greatly appreciated by the jury. Working to restore not only the building but to also restore the site has given this building new life. The architects did the right thing by not overdesigning but by letting the building tell them what to do. The prairie grasses and old tracks on the inner circle are beautiful. The entry landscaping is out of character but a small snit in the overall project.*



ROBERT SHIMER/HEDRICH-BLESSING

## Choctaw Library

*Merit Award for Excellence in Architecture*

Choctaw, OK

Elliott+Associates Architects

### Jury comments:

*Clean, expressive use of materials. Clearly a public building.*





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## Waitt Media Corporate Interiors

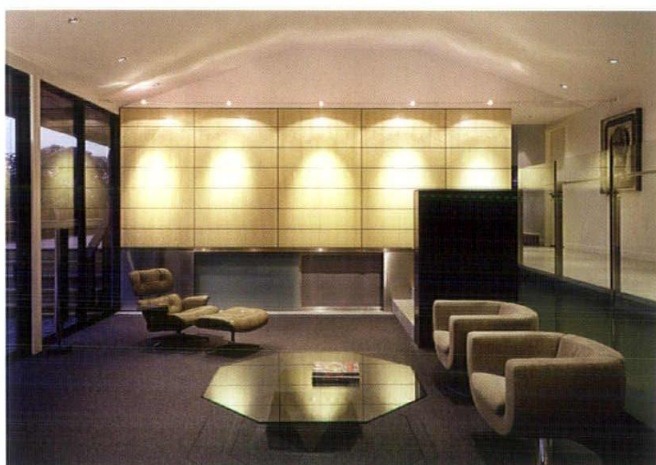
*Merit Award for Interior Architecture*

Omaha, NE

RDG Planning & Design—Omaha

### Jury comments:

*Common materials, well crated, execute a thoughtful series of spaces. The juxtaposition of transparent and solid, light and heavy, provide for a rich environment.*



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## Fingerman Residence

*Merit Award for Interior Architecture*

Des Moines, IA

Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck Architecture

### Jury comments:

*An astounding transformation of an existing residence into an elegant environment of metal, glass and wood. The detailing is first-rate throughout.*



## Principal Riverwalk Master Plan

*Merit Award for Regional and Urban Planning*

Des Moines, IA

RDG Planning & Design—Des Moines

### Jury comments:

*This is a thoughtful plan to transform the riverfront into a regional as well as local amenity. Simple in its goal, it contains the necessary complexity that reflects the surrounding urban influences.*





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## Kenyon Building

*Citation Award for Excellence in Architecture*

Des Moines, IA

RDG Planning & Design—Des Moines

### Jury comments:

*Working with a palette of existing heavy timber construction, the architect wove modern yet utilitarian materials to create an amazing sense of vitality. This is an inspired, high energy and innovative office “playhouse” work environment.*



GEOFFREY LOO

## Baptist Medical Center, Heart Institute

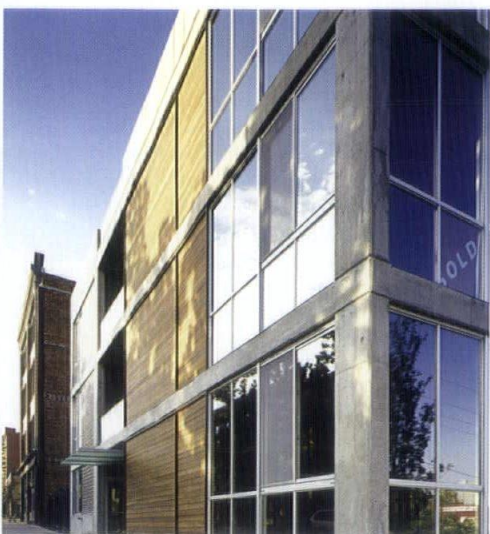
*Citation Award for Excellence in Architecture*

Jacksonville, FL

Cannon Design

### Jury comments:

*The bold iconic device of the helipad accentuates the centeredness and the entry as an active hub. The flowing form of the addition emphasizes the bend in the river and actually creates pleasant, noninstitutional spaces on the inside. The building’s circulation system has a poetic quality that avoids the ‘rabbit warren’ planning that often is found in hospitals.*



MIKE SINCLAIR PHOTOGRAPHY

## 5 Delaware Lofts

*Citation Award for Excellence in Architecture*

Kansas City, MO

El dorado inc

### Jury comments:

*A simple, rational, yet elegant solution that expresses the vitality of living in the city. It is a clean, strict and controlled modern building—a nice place for the residents.*





ROB MCHENRY/CHRIS HARTER

## Abode Home Store

Citation Award for Interior Architecture

Wichita, KS

Wilson Darnell Mann PA

### Jury comments:

*A thoughtful foil showcasing the furniture on display. The ceiling is rich in detailing, organizing the space within the building shell in an industrial architecture that contrasts well with the contents below.*

## Bizarre

Citation Award for Interior Architecture

Omaha, NE

Randy Brown Architects

### Jury comments:

*Simple idea, cleverly presented and executed.*

## P+D House

Citation Award for Interior Architecture

Omaha, NE

Randy Brown Architects

### Jury comments:

*A wonderful transformation of an existing dwelling into flowing spaces. Detailing is transparent and light, reinforcing the organization of the plan.*

## Mid City Bank

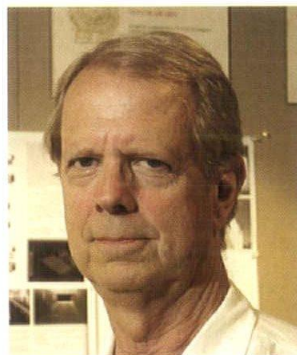
Merit Award for Excellence in Architecture

Omaha, NE

Randy Brown Architects

### Jury comments:

*A beautiful example of a modern building for the plains. By utilizing a simple diagram of axis, wall and building forms, this architect was able to develop an elegant conceptual solution. The detailing is elegant and emphasizes the thinness and float of the roofs, which is not an easy thing to pull off. The detailing makes the initial concept work.*



## Iowa Design Excellence Awards Jury

The jury for this year's AIA Iowa Excellence in Design Awards was drawn from the Triangle Area Design Society (TADS), a diverse forum of award-winning architects in North Carolina who, through their practice and standing in the community, are committed to good design and to improving the environment.

In place for eight years, the forum is comprised of four women and six men who represent both North Carolina State University's College of Design faculty and professional firm sizes that range from small (five full-time staff) to large (40 full-time staff). The firms represented comprise a broad cross-section of the profession with projects ranging from well-crafted, one-of-a-kind residences, to "green" structures, non-profit projects, to large performing arts centers. Members of the group meet every month, either in one of the firm's offices or at a participant's project, to share criticism and advise each other on their work.

TADS charter member Frank Harmon, FAIA, is principal of Frank Harmon Architect of Raleigh, NC, and an associate professor of architecture at NC State University. When Harmon is asked to chair an awards jury — which he is quite frequently — he assembles a core team of judges from TADS, as he did for the Iowa awards program. "We work together very well because we know each other so well and our discussions and criticisms can be quite frank," Harmon said. "All of us [in TADS] are design award winners, so we know what you go through to submit and to share a high standard of design through an awards program."

Other members of the Iowa awards jury from Raleigh, NC, were Francisco Gomes of Gomes + Staub Architects; Jeffrey S. Lee, AIA, principal and director of design at PBC + L Architecture; Gail Peter Borden, AIA, principal of the Borden Partnership; and Roger H. Clark, FAIA, distinguished professor of architecture at NCSU. Also on the jury were Ellen Weinstein, partner at Dixon Weinstein Architects and Philip Szostak, AIA, principal of Szostak Design, Inc., both from Chapel Hill, NC.

In addition to Iowa's awards jury, TADS has provided awards juries for the Philadelphia AIA, Virginia AIA, Kansas AIA, and Miami Chapter of the Florida AIA.

"To be a part of a design jury is one of the most interesting things you can do as a practicing professional," Frank added, "because you get to see what I like to call an 'xray' of what's going on in design elsewhere. The submissions for the AIA Iowa awards this year were probably some of the highest quality that we've ever seen. It was a delight to review the work."

Frank Harmon has won more AIA design awards than any other firm in North Carolina and has been published in many national and regional periodicals and books, including *The Green House: New Directions in Sustainable Architecture*. His work ranged from small sheds to 70,000-square-foot corporate headquarters. His firm was named "Top Firm of the Year" in 2005 by *Residential Architect* magazine.





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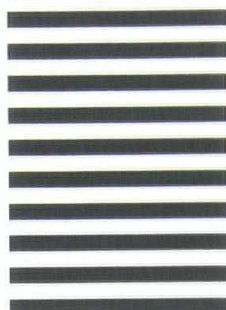
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# ISU Architecture Awards

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**T**HE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY IS ALWAYS HONORED TO BE FEATURED IN THIS ANNUAL AWARDS ISSUE OF *IOWA ARCHITECT*. We have included the final projects of two students who were selected to represent different degree programs in our department. Renee DeVries received the RDG Bussard Dikis Design Award for the top undergraduate diploma project. Carissa Gavin received recognition for the top thesis in the master of architecture program. These diploma and thesis projects provide an opportunity for our students to explore an area of personal interest, which they do with extreme passion and commitment. These opportunities help create an expectation for exploration that they carry with them into the profession. Renee and Carissa are extraordinary students; they represent the high quality of our graduates who are helping our department earn a well-respected reputation across the nation. We are proud of our many students who are responsible for this prestigious recognition.

We are also proud of our faculty family who provides the primary stimulation for our students and encourages them to excel. For an unprecedented fifth consecutive year, members of our faculty team have received one of the top national awards bestowed by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA). This year professors Tom Leslie and Ann Sobiech-Munson will be recognized for their experimental course entitled "Writing About Architecture." They will be honored with one of only two Creative Achievement Awards to be presented at the National ACSA convention this spring. The extraordinary accomplishments of our faculty and students supplement the tremendous national recognition realized by our profession here in Iowa. Together they provide mutual reinforcement and enhance our opportunities for collective and continued success. Pride in this success can be shared by all of us.

—Cal Lewis, Department of Architecture

## AWARD

RDG BUSSARD DIKIS  
DESIGN AWARD 2005

STUDENT: RENEE DEVRIES  
STUDIO CRITIC: CHARLIE MASTERSON

WORK FROM THE FIRST SEMESTER  
AND DIPLOMA PROJECT MATERIAL  
IN PROCESS WAS JURIED BY  
MEMBERS OF RDG BUSSARD DIKIS

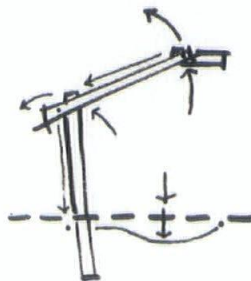
## As I Dance...

Setting out to discover the finest detail of this structure, the idea of the building as an instrument evolved. As I dance...the building dances around me. So how does it work?

Imagine that a piano made no sound but produced form. The form is ever-changing as that of music. It is form through time. The form I am choosing to demonstrate is inspired, as explained previously, by the "volume of dance." Imagine the keys of the piano laid out in an entirely different manner. Seemingly chaotic. Imagine a "dancer" acting as the fingers of the piano at a much greater scale. The keys are between one-half and

one pace apart. The dancer presses a key. The key informs a particular part of the structure to move. Therefore, as the dancer learns how the structure is stimulated, can the dancer learn to make the building move as desired.

If we could translate somehow the notes of written music as they are played on the piano or other instrument into a way of "playing" them on the keys of this instrument, perhaps we could see what music might look like. What could Brahms look like? Does it appear with the same mood as when it sounds? Is Beethoven's *Fifth* as bold and exciting?



Designing the mechanics

RENEE DEVRIES

I devoted the second semester to the details and decided to discover how this "building" would work. I wanted it to function as a direct response from the occupant. When I thought of it as an interactive environment and then more like an instrument of performance, I quickly discovered the similar action of a piano key. It uses inertia to amplify the action of the instrumentalist into the structure.





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Call for entries deadline—May 15, 2006

March 2007 issue—Process  
Call for entries deadline—December 1, 2006

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- Project credits for each project (hard copy)
- At least one plan, section or other descriptive drawing that conveys relevant information regarding each project (hard copy and TIF or JPG files on CD, 300 DPI at 3" x 4")
- Four or more digital images on CD for each project (TIF or JPG images, 300 DPI at 8" x 10" size—professional images preferred). Images can also be submitted in the form of slides or 4" x 5" transparencies
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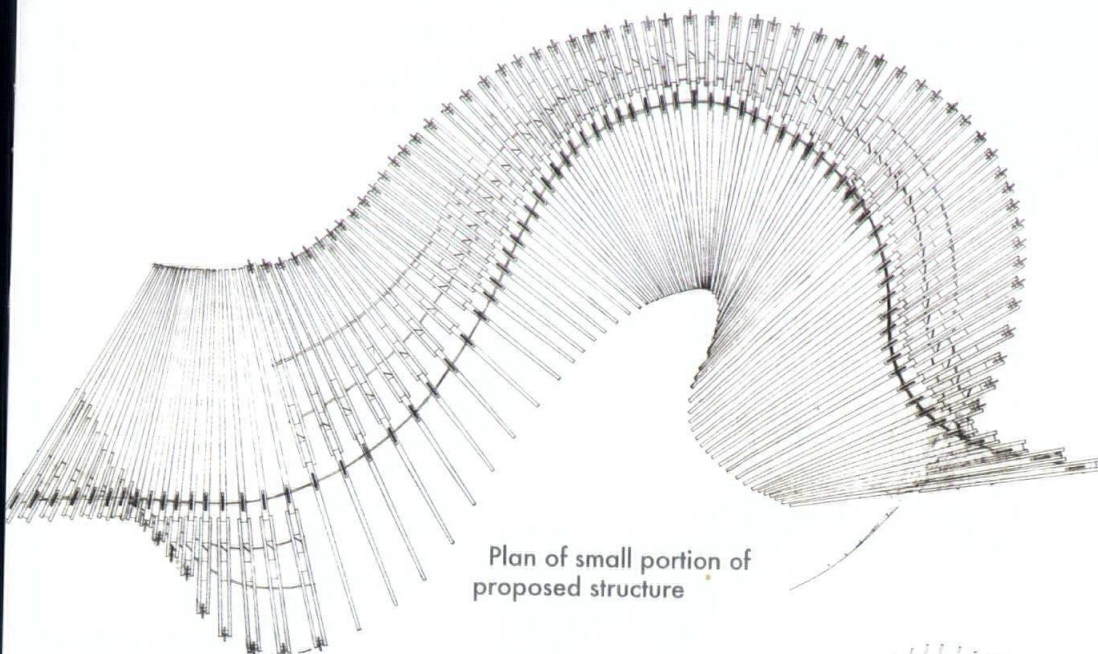
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As I dance...the building  
dances around me.  
So how does it work?



Plan of small portion of  
proposed structure

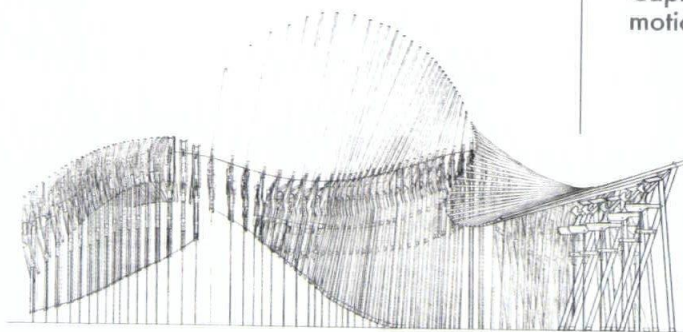
#### A Studio of Dance

The floor became similar to the keys of a piano and the occupant an "instrumentalist" who could learn how to manipulate the building to move as he/she desired. The size of the building would require multiple instrumentalists/dancers working together. The layout of keys, as I first proposed, would require the instrumentalist to make both large and small gestures, covering great lengths of the floor in a small matter of time. Thus, creating a new form of functional dance, as fingers on the keys of a piano.

Unlike the keys of the piano, which are laid out in a single line, these keys would be arranged according to what a human body is capable of activating, according to the greatest number of possibilities for the motion of the structure, and according to the desired appearance of the building, which is fueled by the choreography of the entire experience.

The structure of each moving part was naturally a modified and much larger version of a piano key and hammer mechanism. The precise movement of the members is yet unsolved and requires, perhaps, the fine-tuning/evolution in amounts equal to or greater than the fine tuning/evolution which the piano has received through time.

The idea of such an architectural performance excites me to forever seek architecture as experience or architecture as performance. Always dramatic and influential...moving...in every sense of the word.



Elevation of small portion of proposed structure



Capturing the  
motion of dance

*Fifth year students are allowed to select the program for their diploma project design studio. It is a unique opportunity earned by these upper level students in our undergraduate curriculum. Renee DeVries took full advantage of her chance to explore architecture in a way that both engaged her passion and opened new perspectives into the expanding realm of architectural experience. Hopefully, her exploration will challenge our imagination and stimulate learning...as it did for her.*

—Cal Lewis

Chair, Department of Architecture



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KATE SCHWENNSSEN AND MICHAEL GOLEC

## Bad ha'Bits'

The thesis *Bad ha'Bits': On the propagation of coverture for Renaissance Venetian noblewomen* is a creative project within the fields of women's studies and architectural design, focusing on how gender is encoded and decoded in architectural spaces that are considered 'feminine' archetypes. The objective of the work was to understand the cultural circumstances that lead to the alteration of spaces by the people that inhabit them and to represent the character to these "after-spaces" through experimental drawing and writing. The building under investigation was the Renaissance convent church, San Zaccaria, in Venice, Italy.

The work, in particular the survey drawings of Renaissance Venetian convent churches and excerpts from civil trials of the same period, forms a narrative of the 'lived experiences' of inhabitants of a culturally significant building. What is revealed is the particular nature of their subversion of the rites and rituals of the order and their altering of the programmatic and material ordering of the architecture, as desired.

"Habits Formed and Worn," the focus of this review for *Iowa Architect*, is the title of the culminating section of the thesis. Through a series of creative associations, it examined the façade of San Zaccaria and the monastic uniform or garment worn by nuns. Both the façade and habit were artifacts conditioned over time to accomplish somewhat parallel programs: cloaking and containing, donning and adorning what exists beneath or behind them. Both served historically to render public the classification of orders and to symbolize publicly the devout life. There were hierarchies represented in the various types of habits worn by nuns, and hierarchies represented in the various formations of the façade that occurred over time.

### Habits Formed

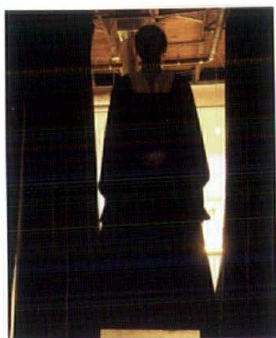
San Zaccaria is a rare example of the Transitional architectural period in Venice. A striation of six layered tiers attributed to two architects, Gothic master Gambello and Renaissance master Codussi. The exterior façade clearly demonstrates the vacillating instability of this period by blurring scale and styles, and interiority with exteriority. It cannot quite be defined as either Gothic or Renaissance but remains somewhere in the muddled middle.

The façade itself fails to reach a coherent expression of cooperative spirit. The overabundant modeling of detail masks a clear expression of structure, or ordering of space. There is also an apparent imbalance in verticals and horizontals. The buttresses

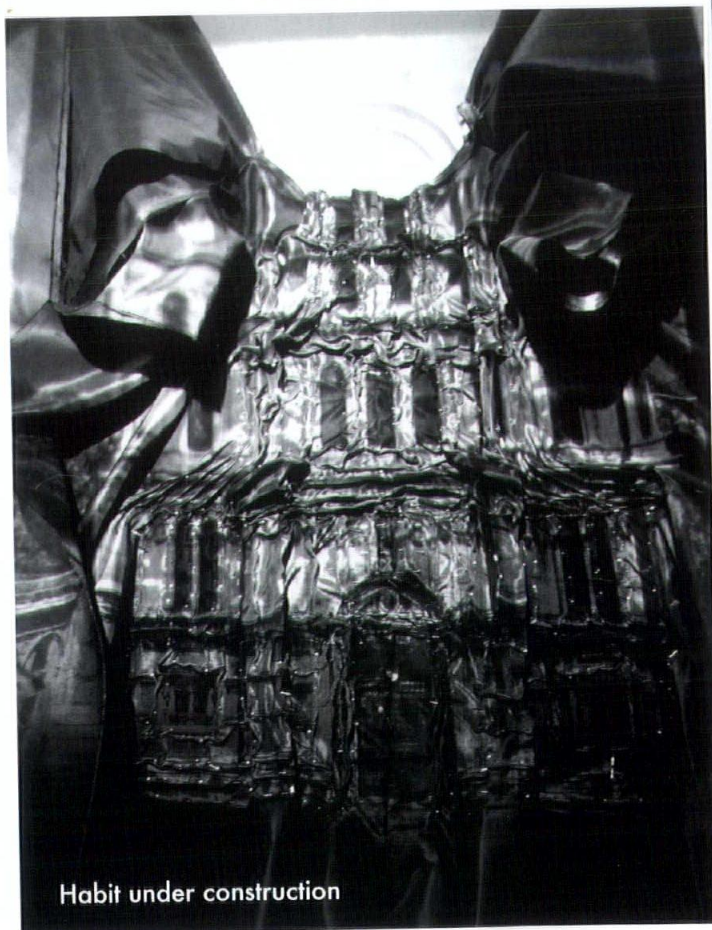
try to hold in the façade while the overbearing entablatures pin it down. The move from planar (Gambello) to plastic (Codussi) also seems at odds; the attempt at lightening the façade actually weighs it down, sometimes flipping it upside down or inside out. A univocal message is a lost expression, overcome by a fluttering of whispers and rumors. Each part seems to maintain a certain level of autonomy instead of the expression of unity. A grand narrative is overtaken by multiple messages, revealing more of what it is trying to mask. The order is undisciplined.

### Habits Worn

Tucked away from view behind the façade, the women of San Zaccaria were ushered through the doors, many never to see the outside again, to take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, accepting community life and denying autonomy. These ideals of equality were at odds with the very structure of the cloistered life that inherently divided sisters by classifying them as either converse or choir sisters. The divisions that were defined by class and status were clearly demarcated and



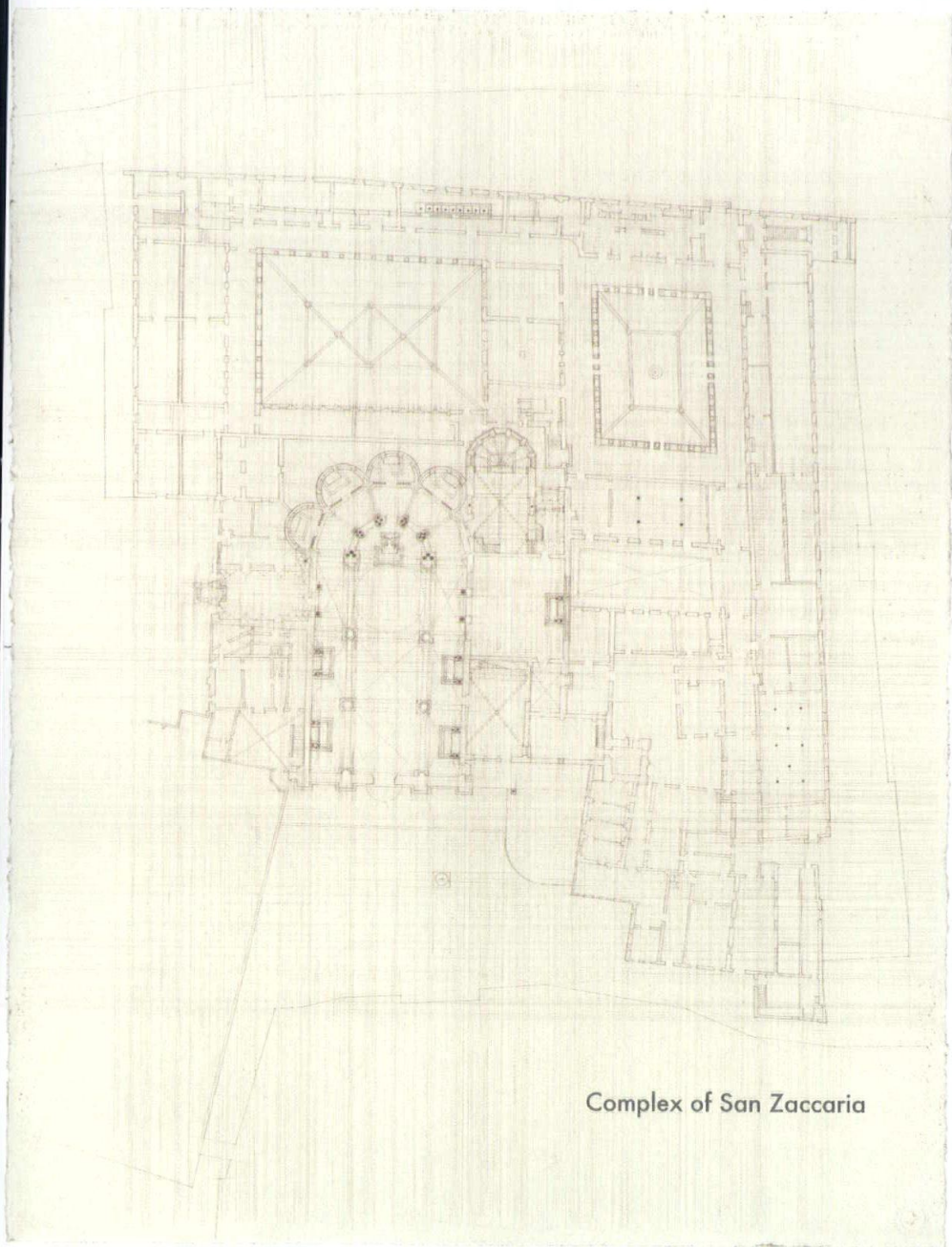
Habit worn for Idle  
Hands exhibition



Habit under construction

CARISSA GAVIN





Complex of San Zaccaria

*Iowa State's graduate program in architecture strongly encourages interdisciplinary work. Carissa Gavin's thesis project is an interesting example of how that work might take advantage of faculty expertise outside the College of Design—in Carissa's case, in the Women's Studies Department.*

*—Clare Cardinal-Pett  
Director of Graduate Education*

Habit reimagined,  
Habit di' San Zaccaria



amplified through dress. The converse donned habits resembling that of the poor while the choir sisters reified their status by dressing at times as elaborate as the secular noble class. Although a clear division between the converse and choir sisters existed, both orders of sisters, against the vows of religious devotion, altered their dress, defying autonomy.

#### ***Bad ha'Bits'***

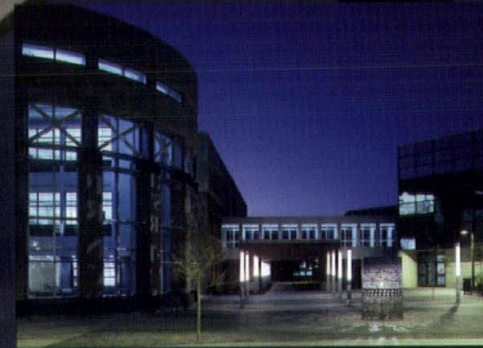
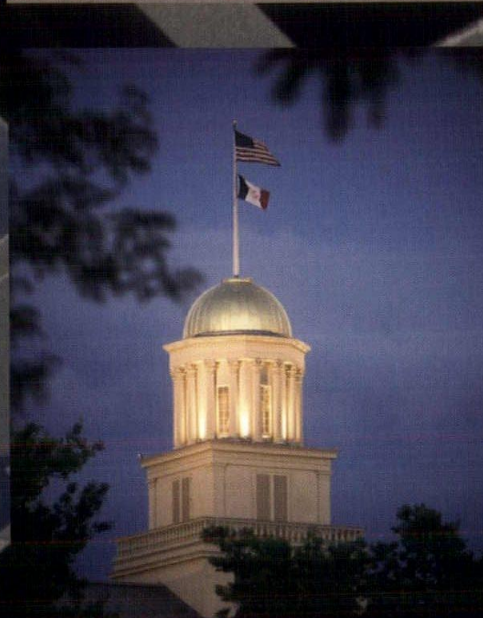
Like the Renaissance sisters' alterations and decoration of their own habits to project a certain identity, in one construction, I took liberty to fashion a reconstructed choir habit into a more modern dress by translating a drawing of the habit of San Zaccaria, ca. 1550, into a fitted garment intended for my own body. In another construction, Habit Di' San Zaccaria, shown here, I formed a semi-constructed habit of black satin-backed taffeta into a representation of the façade of San Zaccaria through the act of folding. This construction references

both the cultural context in Renaissance Venice and the architectural construct of the convent. It exhibits that which was once attempted to mask: spaces seem to secrete from, or emerge through, the surface of the façade that once held them secret. The 'lived-experience' comes face to face with the public.

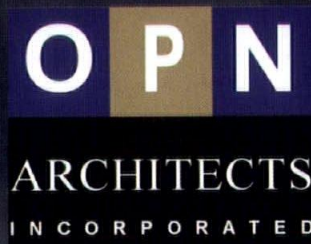
I wish to thank my major professor Mitchell Squire whose encouragement, belief and guidance provided the backbone of support for this project; words are not enough to express my gratitude. I would also like to thank my committee members Charles Masterson, Kate Schwennsen and Michael Golec for their involvement and contributions; the Iowa State University Department of Architecture for providing me with a teaching assistantship in Rome, Italy; and the Women's Studies Department for granting me two travel research grants to pursue further research in Venice, Italy.

See *Iowa Architect* magazine, Issue No. 05.253 "Extra Credit" page 8, Alternatives, for an expanded description of the drawings and civil documents mentioned here.





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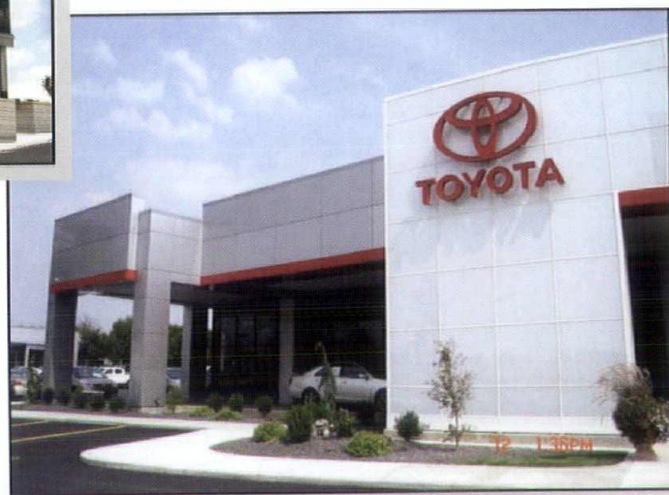
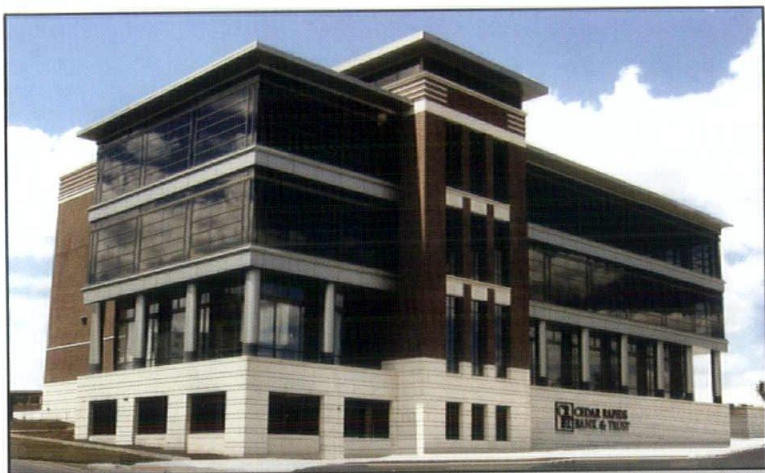
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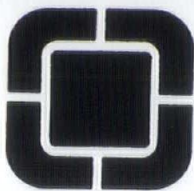
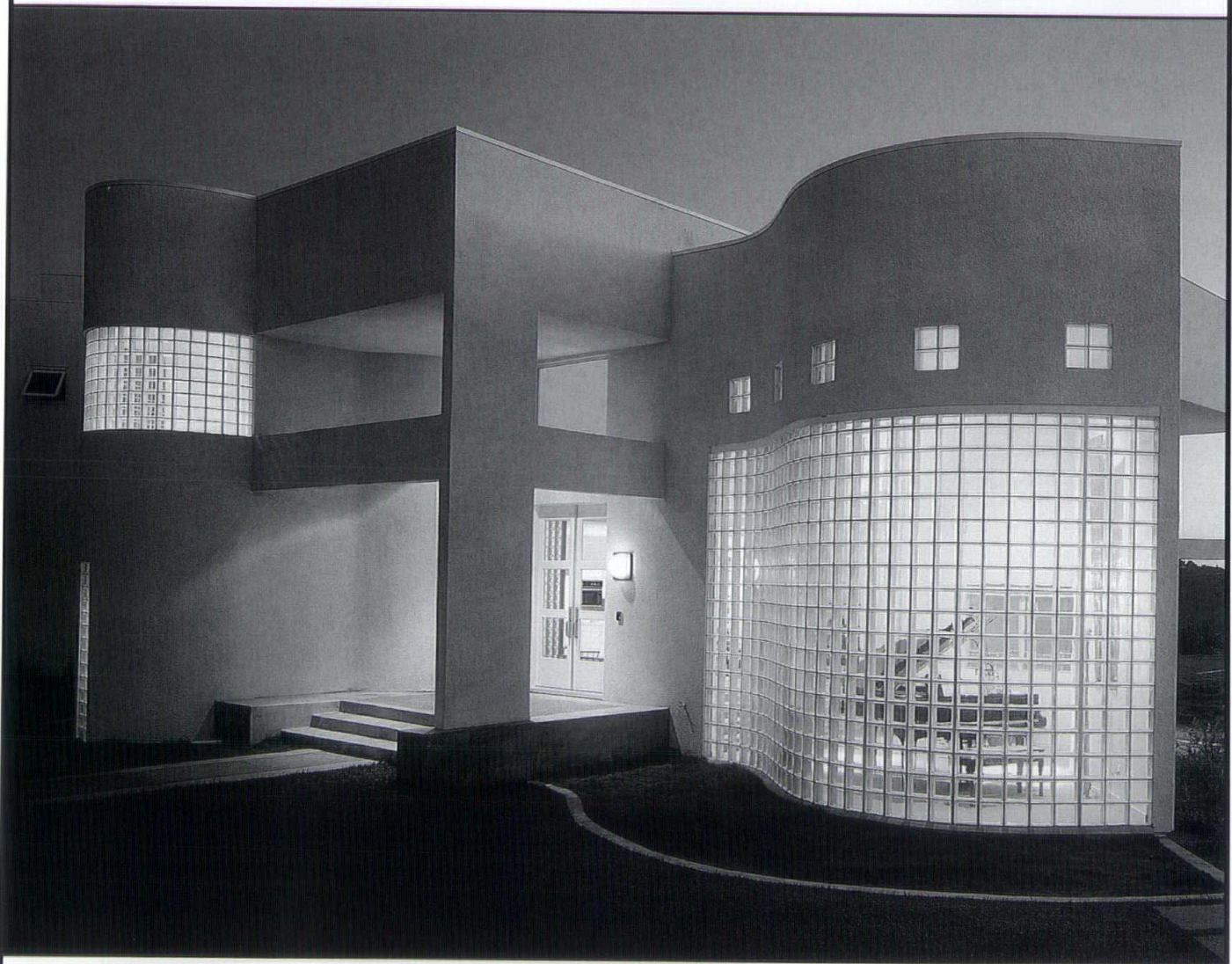
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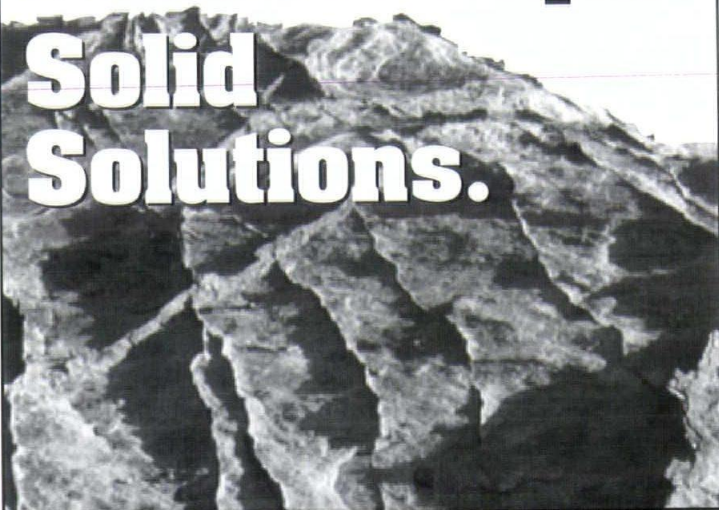


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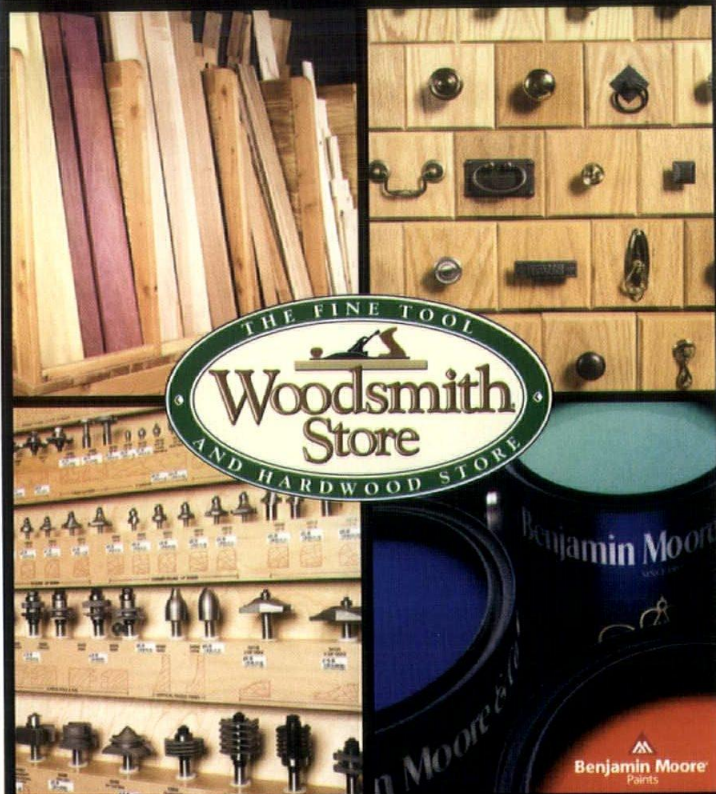
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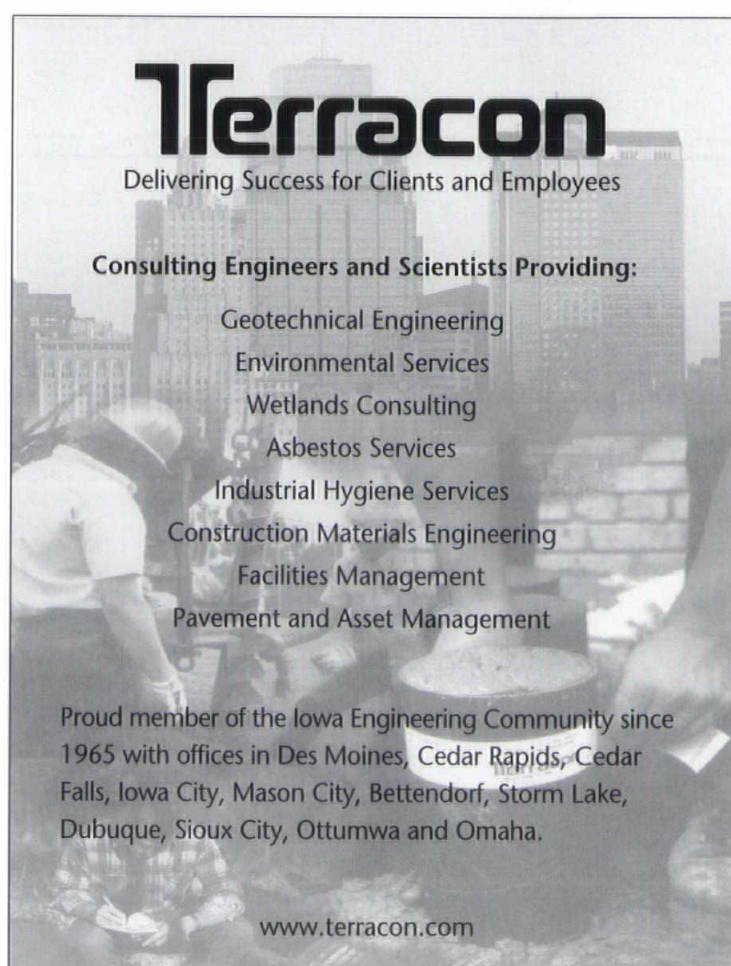
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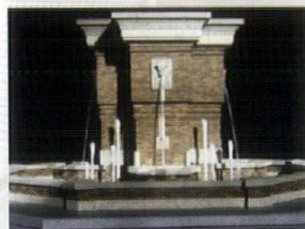
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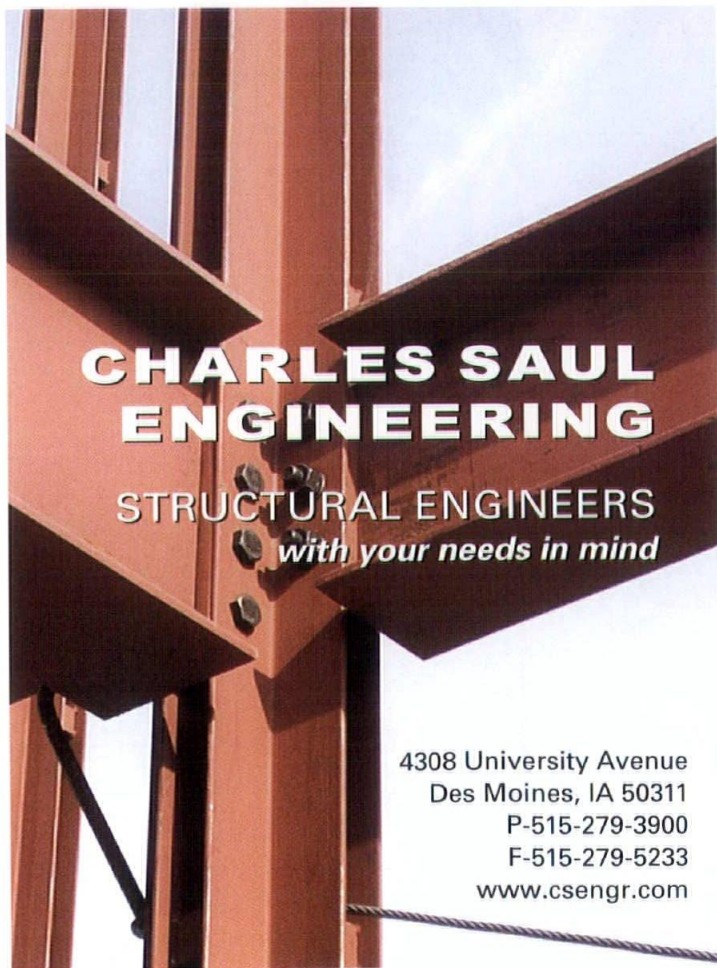
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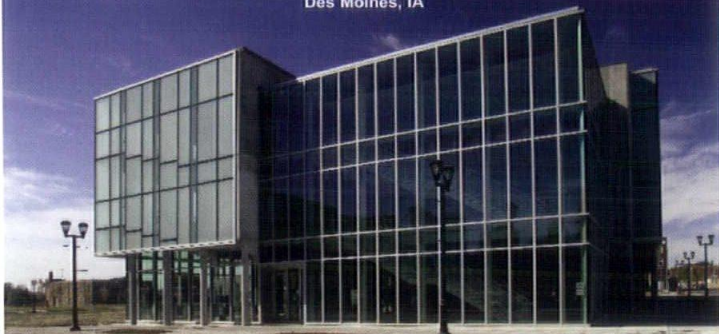


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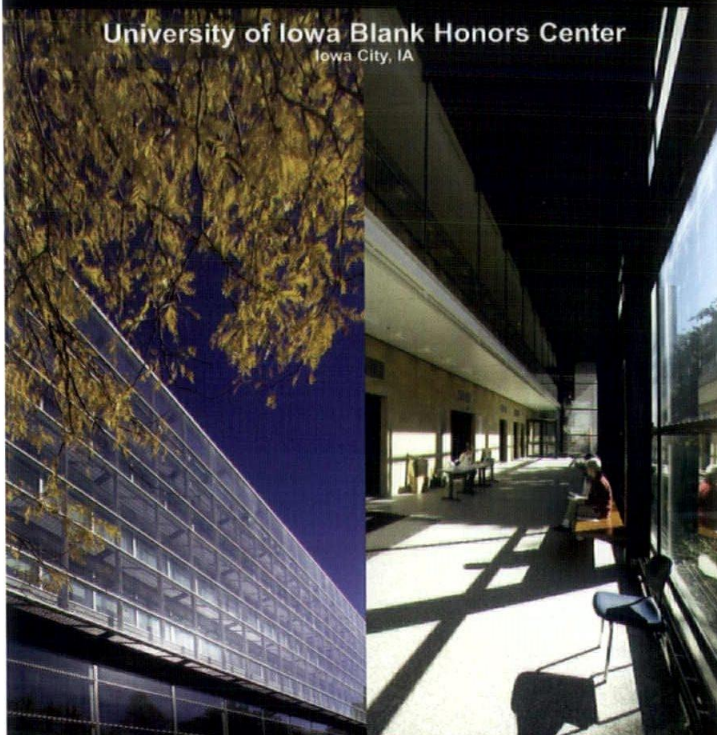


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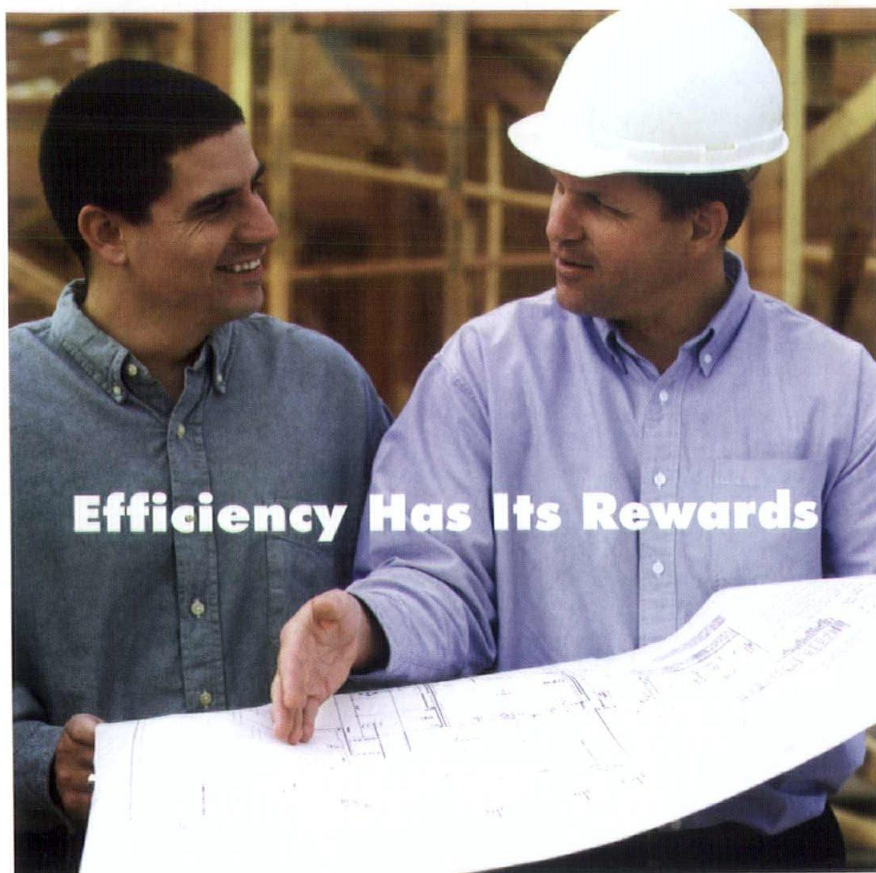
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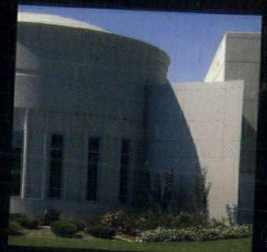
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